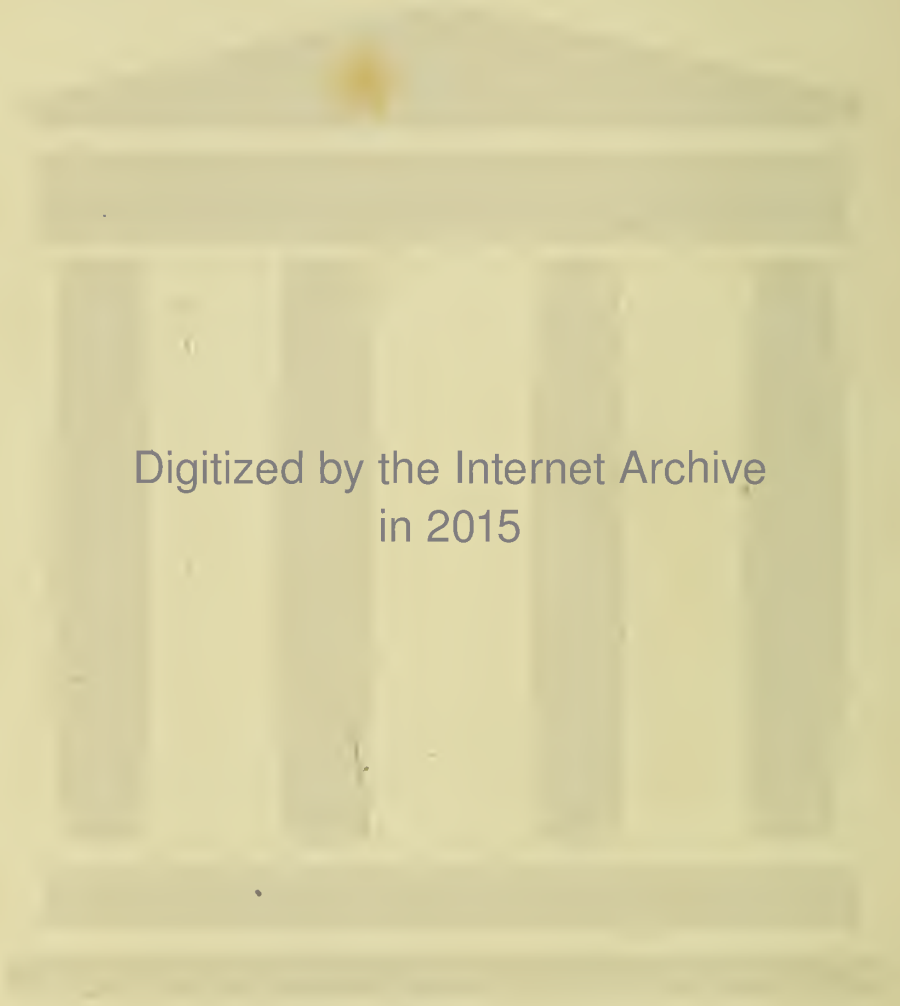
PR4541
.D9M3



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/marytudorhistori00deve

MARY TUDOR

AN HISTORICAL DRAMA

THE

LAMENTATION OF IRELAND

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

SIR AUBREY DE VERE Bart.

BOSTON COLLEGE LIBRARY
CHESTNUT HILL, MASS.

WILLIAM PICKERING

1847

TO THE

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON

This Volume is dedicated,

ACCORDING TO THE INTENTION OF THE AUTHOR,

AND IN MEMORY OF A LOVE

TRULY FRATERNAL, AND LASTING

TO THE END.

CONTENTS.

	Page
MARY TUDOR, Part the First	1
Part the Second	145
The Lamentation of Ireland	333
To my beloved Wife on her becoming of Age	345
Fragment—"See from its ambush yon fair infant peeping"	347
A Walk by the Shore at Ilfracomb	347
Lines written after my Inspection of Lundy Island	349
Fragment written at Southhill Park	351
Sunset on the Lower Shannon	353
Song, "The light of love can never"	354
Busaco. A Battle-sketch	354
Fragment.—"How sweet that little lawn amid the woods"	359
The Assignation	359
True Love	361
The benumbed Butterfly	362
Epitaph on Sir John Moore	365
The Widow	366
The Flight of Napoleon	367
To a Friend requesting me to write a Poem on a great Victory	368
Lines on the Death of the Hon. William Cecil Pery, killed at the Storming of St. Sebastian	369
Ode to the Duchess of Angouleme	371
On the Death of Sir Thomas Picton, slain at Waterloo	378
Ode to the Eagle Standard	380

Page

Epitaph for Colonel Rickard Lloyd. (Killed at the Passage of the Nive) 385
The Anniversary of Waterloo 386
To M— 390
" In the fulness of time I shall lie in the earth," . 391
The Sorrows of Peace. Fragment 392
Fragment. Degeneracy of National Character . 393
To my Country 395
A Poet's Home 397
Petrarca. Canzone III 399
Stanzas from Menzini. By a Lady 403
Translation of an Inscription from a mural Monument at Rome 404
From the French of Madame de Murat . . . 404
Philosophic Love. (From Rossi) 405
From the Italian 405
Cato in Utica. (From Luigi Alamanni) . . . 406
Repentance. Madrigal of Michelagnolo Buonarotti 406
The March of Xerxes. Epigram of Luigi Alamanni, 1556 407
The Glen of Glangoole 407
Stanzas on Solitude 410
Pastoral Song 411
Ode to April 413
The Dreams of Youth 417
A Dream. Fragment 431
Lines. " Sorrow to him who with a tearless eye" . 433
Verses for Music 435
Maidenly Sorrow. Canzonet 436
Lucretia. (From the Latin) 437
The Course of Time 437
Madrigal 438
From Meleager 438
From Antipater 439
On Anacreon. From Antipater 439
From Theocritus. 440

Page
A Song of Spring. Addressed to a Child . . . 440
Stanzas 445
The Lot of All 446
Fragments. 1845—6. 448
" There is no danger, Friends, unless we fear" . . 448
" Restrict me not in friendship &c." 448
Times past 449
The Bride 450
A Homestead 450
Character of Queen Elizabeth. 451
" To live alone" 452
" Men of large intellects have minds like wells," . 452
" Life hath no conditions" 453
" Life streams down to us, a mysterious river" . 453
" Nor cheat yourself, nor hire a world &c." . . 454
" Oh rather after grief let us rejoice" 454
Union in Absence 454
" Be sure this earthly love which dwells within us" . 455
" Divine love hath its growth within the heart" . 455
" An if I be a worm, mine office is" 456
" The dove-like spirit of peace &c." 456

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD VI.
JOHN DUDLEY, DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND; *father of Lord Guilford Dudley.*
HENRY GREY, DUKE OF SUFFOLK; *father of Lady Jane Grey.*
EDWARD COURTENAYE, MARQUESS OF EXETER; *cousin of the King and Princesses.*
MARQUESS OF WINCHESTER; *Lord Treasurer.*
CRANMER; *Archbishop of Canterbury.*
EARLS OF PEMBROKE AND OF ARUNDEL.
LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY; *husband of Jane Grey.*
BISHOPS GARDINER, BONNER, TONSTAL; *Roman Catholic deprived Prelates.*
SIR THOMAS WYATT, CAPTAIN BRETT } *insurrectionary leaders.*
SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD, SIR HENRY JERNINGHAM } *Mary Tudor's Officers.*
FAKENHAM, *Dean of St. Paul's, her Confessor.*
SIR JOHN PALMER, *a friend of Northumberland.*
Other Lords, Citizens, &c.
A Headsman, Soldiers, &c.

MARY TUDOR, *sister of the King, afterwards Queen.*
ELIZABETH, *second sister of the King.*
LADY JANE GREY, *usurping Queen.*
DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *mother of Jane Grey.*

MARY TUDOR.

PART THE FIRST.

ACT I.

Scene I.

A Street in London.

Enter Pembroke, Arundel, Wyatt, Jerningham, Bedingfield.

BEDINGFIELD.

BE well assured the King is sick to death.

PEMBROKE.

Tush, Sir, the King is young, and young blood fires
Like flax.

BEDINGFIELD.

And dies as quickly. I repeat it,
Even now the King lies at the point of death.

WYATT.

How can it be? But one short month it seems
Since I beheld him on his jennet's back,

With hawk on wrist, his bounding hounds beside,
Charge up the hill side through the golden gorse,
Swallowing the west wind, till his cheeks glowed
out
Like ripened pears. The whirring pheasant sprang
From the hedged bank; and, with a shout, in air
The bright boy tossed his falcon; then with spur
Pressed to his jennet's flank, and head thrown
back,
And all the spirit of life within his eye
And voice, he drew not rein, till the spent quarry
Lay cowering 'neath the hawk's expanded wings.

ARUNDEL.

And what saith Sir John Cheke, his Grace's tutor?
That one so apt to learn, mature in judgment,
Ne'er hath o'erleaped the silken fence of child-
hood.

WYATT.

Too hotly from the deep well of his heart
Boils up his fevered blood.

BEDINGFIELD.

You miss the mark!
No fever pants upon King Edward's life;
Nor natural decay hath drained his heart.

PEMBROKE.

Then, by the Rood! John Dudley must be
questioned

Wherefore he mews the King up thus at Greenwich,
With beldams, herberers, and wizard quacks?

BEDINGFIELD.

Too late! the axe, henceforth, shall answer make
To dangerous questioners.

WYATT.

He flies too high
This modern Dedalus!

ARUNDEL.

O royal seed
Of York and Lancaster, in Tudor blended,
How are ye fallen, when this base minion churl,
This felon-born, dares lift his ransomed hand
Against your sacred house—misrules your people—
Usurps your sceptre—decimates your peers—
Nay, holds the throne in his arbitrement!

BEDINGFIELD.

Aye—there you press the spring of his design.
No child of the eighth Harry shall be Queen
If Dudley's will be law.

ARUNDEL.

Pernicious Traitor!
Much hath he dared! but with plebeian hand
Dares he to clutch that crown the Norman rent

From Harold's helm—and lion-hearted Richard
Bore through the fields of Palestine redeemed,
At Ascalon, in the Crusaders' van?
O spirits of our old nobility!
Rise from your tombs and blast this upstart carle!
Mowbray is gone; but Thomas Howard lives!
The suns of Bohun and de Clare have set;
But Oxford's star beams brightly from his shield!
Nevilles there be, though Warwick's veins are cold!
Awake avengers! Bearders of kings arise!
And crush the caitiff!

BEDINGFIELD.

One and all we join
That cry, O Arundel! Well I remember
When from the midst of English Gentlemen
Great Somerset, the Uncle of the King,
Was, like some stag, the captain of the herd,
Torn down and throttled by this blood-hound Dudley!
How flashed your eyes above your half-drawn sword,
While muttered malisons hissed through your teeth!

WYATT.

Sirs, be ye calm, probing the kingdom's hurt.

She whom this Dudley wills to wear the crown
Descends, through Tudor, from Plantagenet:
And the two Roses on so fair a cheek
As Lady Jane's, the Duke of Suffolk's daughter,
Have never blended.

ARUNDEL.

The Duchess' mother lives—

PEMBROKE.

Nor she—nor any daughter of her house—
Not my son's wife, shall ever be my Queen!

WYATT.

Beshrew King Harry! had he loved one wife—
Or crowned no concubine—our course were plain.
But now—In sooth I trow not if to marry
One's brother's wife, be uncanonical,
But this I know, howe'er legitimate,
The Lady Mary's neither young nor fair,
But black Papistical. The Lady Bess
Loves the true Church, and is as fair withal
As her frail mother Boleyn.

BEDINGFIELD.

There's the rub.
Too sweetly Boleyn smiled on Harry's wooing
Ere he was severed by sufficient warrant
From the crowned Queen. But six short months divided

The bridal and the birth. Élizabeth
May not be hailed legitimately Queen:
But who shall gainsay Mary?

WYATT.

That dare I?
Unless the sacred charter of our church
Be well assured. If not, the Suffolk line,
The blood of Grey, aye, Dudley's, I prefer.

JERNINGHAM.

Sir Thomas Wyatt, you presume too far;
Disparaging the royal Mary's claim—
Which I aver—

ARUNDEL.

O peace! the time needs union.
Waste not in idle brawls your generous ardour.
But lift your swords, and swear, kissing the hilts,
That England shall not be a Traitor's prey—
Nor Tudor's heritage adorn a Grey!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Greenwich—the King's Bedchamber.

King Edward *on a Couch:* Lady Jane *reading.*

JANE.

How fares your Highness now?

EDWARD.

Thy sweet voice, Jane,
Soothes every pain. A film grew o'er mine eyes;
A murmur, as of breezes on the shore,
Or waters lapping in some gelid cave,
Coiled round my temples; and I slept.

JANE.

Ah cousin!
Not in my voice the charm. Within this volume
A sanatory virtue lives enshrined,
As in Bethesda's pool.

EDWARD.

By an angel stirred!
I slept—methought the merry, chiming birds
Were round me, and the bleating of the lambs,
And cheerful harmony of hounds and horn.
And murmuring winds, and waters among trees,
Making the diapason of our Earth;
While by my side dear Uncle Somerset
Rode, stately with grave smile. Where is he now?
Ah, fatal falsehoods! fatal credulity!
Look at this hand! health withered in its veins
Signing the unnatural warrant.

JANE.

Judge less hardly.
You were the instrument, but not the doer,

In that bad deed.

EDWARD.

I am too young—too young
For sorrow and remorse; yet both are here!
I yearn for freedom, like some callow scholar
Over his task perplexed; and it will come.
Soon shall I leap forth like the lark at morn
Into the pathless sky—and through the gates
Of light, on—on—to heaven! Hark! some noise.
Who thus disturbs the last rest of a King?

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND *and* CRANMER.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

We come, my liege, deputed by the Council,
To lay before your Grace the realm's sad state
Thus widowed of your presence; and abashed
By the frowns of coming wrong. Am I permitted?

EDWARD.

Permitted? ah my Lord, custom permits—
You seldom tread the paths of ceremony.
Say on—my soul is sad, but I will hear you.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

My Lord Archbishop will explain how far
Zeal strengthens us to stem the tide of evils
Which, should it please high heaven to take
your Grace,

Your death would loose upon us.

CRANMER.

May I speak?
We pray you judge, should harm befall your Grace,
The dangers of the Church; no pious Prince,
Versed in true doctrine of our Faith, succeeding.
How ill the Lady Mary stands affected
Unto the Church is known. Elizabeth
Gives, peradventure, better hope; but here
Their claims make up a tissue so perplexed
The undoing of the woof destroys the web.
We must eschew both, or hold fast to both.
And thus by right of primogeniture
The Lady Mary at our peril succeed.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Mark well! to England's and the Church's ruin!

CRANMER.

Now well we know, a wise Prince and religious,
God's glory and his kingdom's weal endangered,
Will put aside all weak respects of blood—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Else would God's vengeance mete out doom hereafter!

CRANMER.

But other hope remains. Three noble daughters

Of Suffolk's bed are of the royal lineage:
Most near, and by their virtues well commended.
Through these—

JANE.

Nay! I must speak. My Lord Archbishop,
I must protest—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Be silent: the church speaks!

CRANMER.

Through these nor persecutor of our faith,
Nor foreign yoke, through marriage may be feared:
For these have been brought up with spiritual food;
Suckled with christian doctrine undefiled;
And matched with husbands zealous for the truth.
That these, firm pledged the true Church to maintain,
Should be successively the kingdom's heirs
Most humbly we advise: and for this Lady,
Eldest of that illustrious house, Jane Grey,
If all her virtues, which speak trumpet-tongued,
Suffice not, we, her father, all the Council,
The Peers of England, yea the Realm itself,
Impledge our lives to back her constancy!

JANE.

O no! not me! This remediless wrong

I have no part in. Edward—you have sisters:
Great Harry's daughter's—England's manifest
heirs.
Leave right its way, and God will guard His own!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The manifest heirs of England! tush! you see not
The very point at issue. Counsellors
Learned in the laws, hold the king's heir to be
Whom the king's testament shall nominate.
Besides, the child of the incestuous Katherine
May not be Queen: nor wanton Boleyn's
daughter.

CRANMER.

Too harshly spoken! Hold him up! he faints—
So—he revives—Sir, look upon this Lady,
This Angel that shall win a crown in heaven,
Worthier than all of Earth! King Edward!
hear me!
Uphold your people in her!

EDWARD.

God be my guide!
Now and forever! Sense and thought forsake me.
O sisters! ye desert me! yet I love ye—
How much I love!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

They come not at your bidding.

Your People be your care.

EDWARD.

Ah yes—my People!
To them, and to my God—be duty done!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Sign then—

JANE.

Sign not!

EDWARD [*signing*].

Come weal, come woe—'tis signed!
Now take me, Lord, from this calamitous life!
Yet if to live and suffer be thy will,
And to thy chosen People serviceable,
I am contented to abide, and serve.

Enter from the side, the PRINCESS MARY, *followed by* BEDINGFIELD, JERNINGHAM *and* FAKENHAM.

At last—and yet too late—I bless thee, sister!
Why comes not Bess?

BEDINGFIELD.

She lay, my Liege, too far
From Framlingham, and time, so rumour ran,
Pressed hardly on your Grace.

MARY [*kissing Edward*].

How wan! how wasted!
My dear, lost brother!

[*Northumberland attempts to pass out.*

BEDINGFIELD.

Go not forth, my Lord,
While here her Highness stays.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How, Varlet, how?
Who shall debar my way?

BEDINGFIELD.

I will—

JERNINGHAM.

And I.

EDWARD.

What means this timeless brawl? Northumberland,
I deemed my sister's visit due to thee:
Whence then this heat? I am too weak to bear it.

MARY.

My Lord of Lisle! or—pardon me—Lord Duke!
(To such a height your style hath grown, I learn)
Your message came—and I am here! but not
Without precaution that secures return.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Madam, you err: know your friends better.

MARY.

Yes.
I know them at their worth.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Lady, you mark not

His Grace's weak estate. I seek no brawl—
And fear no foe.

MARY.

God's death! my Lord, nor I!
I bid you silence, Sir.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What? menace me?

BEDINGFIELD.

Beware this sword—if you advance, it strikes!

JANE.

O peace, good father, peace! the King sinks fast.

MARY.

Perils beset me—scorning all I come:
Shall I abide with thee?

EDWARD.

This gentle Jane
Hath been a sister in my sister's absence.

MARY.

Why was I bade to go? He bade me fly,—
Ah Traitor! [*pointing to Northumberland.*

EDWARD.

It is now too late—too late!
I have done what it were well had ne'er been done.

JANE.

O would to God that act might be recalled!

MARY.

What act?

JANE.

That makes me Queen.

MARY.

Thou Queen! O never
Shall regal crown clasp that unwrinkled brow!
Thou Queen? go, girl—betake thee to thy
mappets!
Call Ascham back—philosophize—but never
Presume to parley with grey counsellors,
Nor ride forth in the front of harnessed knights!
Leave that to me, the daughter of a King.

EDWARD.

I have wronged thee to save the state from wrong.
I had much to say; but faltering thought and
tongue
Forbid. Never shall foreign Prince or Prelate
Bear sway in England. So my father willed.
Cranmer, speak thou.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Nay, I speak now. The King
Still, madam, proffers hope, on penitence.
The crown may yet be your's—this act annulled;
If here before this dying Saint, in presence
Of this most holy Prelate, and this Lady
Wise past her years, your errors you renounce.

MARY.

Sir, have you done? simply I thus reply.
Not to drag England from this slough of treason—
Nor save this lady's head—nor your's, Archbishop;—
Not even my brother's life—would I abjure
My faith, and forfeit heaven!

CRANMER.

Pause, proud Lady!
The end hath come. Lo! one among us stands
Chainer of every tongue! queller of Princes!
One moment more, and penitence were vain.
[*All kneel by the King's couch.*

EDWARD.

Lord! keep thy People steadfast in the Faith!
I die—bless all—Jesus receive my soul. [*Dies.*

CRANMER.

He's dead!—and never passed a purer spirit,
Stored with more graces of humanity,
More fraught with truths divine, than this lost King.
For he was grave, as well beseemed a King,
Though joyous in his spirit as a child.
Of wit so keen, that all expectancy
Of nature was outstripped: and thus he dies
Consumed in his own brightness. Had he lived

The sweet conditions of ingenuous nature
Had won all good men's love, as they have long
The hope of all the learned: for he began
To favour learning ere he knew it fully;
And knew, ere time remained to use it well.
Too soon he dies! yet not without memorials
That shall be storied long and treasured fondly.
He lacked but time to leave the world example
Of all a King, so trained and graced, might be!

MARY.

And thou art gone! hast left me unforgiven!—
O brother! was this righteous? gloomier now
This dreary world frowns on me, and its cares.
Womanly dreams, farewell! stern truths of life
Stamp on my heart all that becomes a Queen!
Dudley, you have dared much; yet, standing here
By my poor brother's clay, I can forgive.
Will you kneel, Dudley?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Never to thee—but here—
To Jane, true Queen I kneel. God save Queen Jane!

BEDINGFIELD.

Ha! traitor!

MARY.

Sheath your swords! here, in Death's chamber,

Blood must not flow.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

No traitor I. I spurn
Your favour, even with these odds—away!
Keep from my path, Fakenham and Bedingfield,
Or by my surging hopes I strike you dead!
Ho! Guards, without! Guilford! your wife to rescue!

MARY.

Again I say—here shed no blood for me!

JERNINGHAM.

I hear thick beating footsteps on the stair—
My liege, 'tis time to fly.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I stay you not—
Begone! [*Exit Mary attended.*

FAKENHAM.

We meet hereafter!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Out, vile worm!
No deed of mine mates me with thee hereafter.

FAKENHAM.

I spake not of that judgement. We shall meet
In this world—by the scaffold—at the grave.
[*Exit.*

Enter LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY, PEMBROKE, *Guards.*

GUILFORD.

What means this tumult—thy distracted bearing?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The king is dead.

GUILFORD.

By you?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

He died by nature.
The Queen hath scaped.

GUILFORD.

The Queen! my Jane is Queen.
What mean you?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Tush—the tongue misquotes the mind.
I spake of Mary Tudor.

GUILFORD.

Mary—here?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Aye—Traitors are within these gates: look round.
I like not Pembroke's mien—nor Winchester's.
I am glad she stayed not here. Urge no pursuit.
The eighth Harry's soul lives in her voice and eye.
It were not well if she had stayed—and lived.

[*He muses for a time.*

[*Aside.*] We lack but time—time satisfies all scruples—
Silence in treason is complicity:—
Whoso connives conspires. [*Aloud*] You know, my Lords,
The late King's testament. It pleased the Council.
Pembroke, your son stands on the throne's first step.

PEMBROKE.

Which yours doth mount.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Holding it safe for your's.
We'll talk of this hereafter: now our cares
Attend the late king's obsequies. My Lord
Of Winchester, be pleased to marshal forth
The sad procession to the Tower. Within
The chapel lay the body, near the altar;
Light tapers, and let solemn psalms be sung.
Guilford, attend the Queen. Pembroke, we'll talk
Of these things privily. Herbert already,
As next of blood, is Captain of the guard:
Suffolk Lord Constable: you—dear friend! choose.
What Pembroke asks can grateful Jane refuse?

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene III.

Chamber in the Tower.

Enter Northumberland.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

These branching passages, and tortuous stairs,
And dark, low chambers (ghostly dens) con-
found me.
Methought the way to Courtenaye's cell was plain.
I have missed the clue: I'll rest me here awhile.
The Race of Dudley mounts—Had Jane no
scruples—
Were Guilford wise as he is plausible,
Then were this new-cemented fabric firm,
And founded for endurance. Not so now.
Yet 'twas a glorious sight! Jane crowned and
plumed,
On her proud palfrey—my fair son beside her—
Scarce less even now than King—England's
broad banner
Flouting the wind before—a goodly sight!
But something lacked there: and that something
grows
Ghost-like on questioning thought. From that
great host

No greeting rose. Base hirelings only cheered.
The pageant drew the people, brought no hearts.
Therefore I seek young Courtenaye's cell; last heir
Of the Plantagenets and line of York.
He owes no grudge to me. Harry the Eighth
Loved not so fair a kinsman near the throne;
So slew his father, stout King Edward's grandson.
With Courtenaye then make I compact alliance.
The man is fair, nor overwise; and rumour
Whispers that Mary Tudor likes him well.
If Fortune fail, this princely fool my friend—
A woman for my foe—What light is that?

[*Pushes a door open: finds a Headsman sharpening his axe.*

HEADSMAN.

Plague on you—you disturb my trade.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How now?

HEADSMAN.

God save you, good my Lord. I knew you not.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why look you on my throat so fixedly?

HEADSMAN.

Pardon, my Lord, it is a trick grew on me

Long years agone: it came when I cut off—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What came, what came?

HEADSMAN.

Ah Sir! you'll not believe me.
'Twas but a double dealing of the eye,
Feigning a red line round a shapely throat.
I saw Anne Boleyn thus when she was crowned—
And she was done to death—was it not strange?
So Katherine Howard seemed at her last feast—
And she was done to death—and by this hand.
So seemed, when standing by his nephew's throne,
The great Protector Somerset—and he—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

No more of this. I seek Lord Devon's cell.

HEADSMAN.

This way, my Lord.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Portents and warnings mock us—
Away! light omens shake not this firm heart.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

EXETER'S *Cell in the Tower.*

EXETER.

STEPS—not my warders—hearken—two are coming,

What next befalls? all day strange sounds were rife;
Trumpets and ordnance. What's to me who reigns
Or dies, or marries? all the sorry chances
Of courtly life! mayhap a King is murdered:
'Tis probable—the commonest accident!
Or Queen beheaded: well, if none but Queens,
I might not quarrel with the royal pastime.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND *and Headsman.*

Ha! I should know that face; and lackeyed thus
By yon grim doomster, guess my coming fate.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I greet you well, Lord Marquess Exeter!
Noble Plantagenet!

EXETER.

Hey! what means this?
The half-forgotten name—and fatal heritage!
Sir John of Dudley—bear and ragged staff!—
Or memory fails me.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Now, Northumberland.

EXETER.

Indeed? excuse me: prisoners limp behind
The vaulting world. You are welcome.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I would greet you

With tidings of content.

EXETER.

Long strangers here!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I take your hand: nor coldly, thus, hereafter
Will you, perchance, vouchsafe it. I have power;
(In Edward's time I only had the will)
To serve you.

EXETER.

Ha! how well I guessed the truth!
One King the more is dead! who now rules England!
Chaste Boleyn's babe—or the Arragonian whelp?
No beauty I'll be sworn, unless Time makes one.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The House of Grey is of the royal lineage.
To that King Edward's will bequeaths the crown.

EXETER.

My lady Duchess Queen?—Now God forbid!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

All cry amen to that—Her Grace of Suffolk
Yields to her wiser daughter—Lady Jane—
My son, Lord Guilford's wife; now Queen of England.

EXETER.

O now I do begin to read the stars,
And note what constellation climbs. My Lord,

Excuse the stiffness of imprisoned knees.
The obsolete posterity of Kings,
Lowly should bend to Kings' Progenitors.
Sir Headsman! art thou married?

HEADSMAN.

Nay, my Lord.

EXETER.

Get thee a wife then, in good haste: get sons!
Full-bosomed honour, like a plant in the sun,
Plays harlot to the hour. Lo! thistles burgeon
Even through the red Rose' cradle!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

My good Lord,
Unseasonable wit hath a warped edge,
Whereby the unskilful take unlooked for scars.
Good night—may fancy tickle you in dreams,
In which nor Boleyn's babe (I quote your phrase)
Nor whelp of Arragon—kind Heaven forfend!
Nor our grim friend here, with uncivil axe,
Dare mingle. Good night, Courtenaye!

EXETER.

Stay, Sir, stay—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

If at your bidding—yet bethink you well,
This trick of irony is dangerous.
Had you not guessed me for a friend, 'twere fatal

To have used it thus—"The whelp of Arragon!"
"Chaste Boleyn!" What if blood of these shall chance
To grace, or blot,—(the thought was your's) the throne?
Were Dudley not a friend, these words might slay you!

EXETER.

Be blisters on my lips!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The rather salve them:
And for your best physician know John Dudley.
Henceforth we are as one—nay—mark me, Devon—
Or friends or foes! Are we as one? Why now,
This hand I clasp, and to my living heart
Fold it; in pledge of lasting amity.
So for short space, farewell! I go to plead
Your cause before the Council, and my daughter
Queen Jane—your loving kinswoman. Good night!

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

Scene I.

The Hall of Framlingham.

Enter Queen Mary Tudor *attended.*

MARY.

WHY is Elizabeth not here to greet me?
Command her to the Presence. Bedingfield
These midnight ridings, imminent escapes,
Make the heart quiver, and flushed temples throb.
To the chapel, Fakenham: I would fain disburthen
This sinful heart, and tortured brain, of all
The imp-like fancies of this perilous night—
Night, that with penitence must be atoned.

JERNINGHAM [*entering*].

Sir Thomas Wyatt craves immediate audience.

MARY.

Religion claims us first. Let Wyatt wait.

JERNINGHAM.

He will not move his power, until assured

The Church as stablished by the late King's law,
Shall be upheld.

MARY.

May God assoilzie him!
And mend Sir Thomas Wyatt! Bid him wait.

JERNINGHAM.

My liege—

MARY.

Sir Henry Jerningham, I have said.

Enter ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH [*kneeling*].

Queen, Sister!

MARY.

To my arms! Pardie! sweet Bess,
You daily grow more stately. Your great brows,
Like our Cathedral porches, double-arched,
Seem made for passage of high thought.

ELIZABETH.

Regard me
Only as a sister: yet, if you need, or seek
My counsel, it is thine,

MARY.

Nay, nay, fair girl,
My counsel is with bearded warriours,
And grey-cowled wisdom.

ELIZABETH.

Be it as you will.

MARY.

Yet never was kind counsel needed more
By aching heart. Little you know my trials.
The fleetness of my horse scarce saved my life;
And I am Queen in nothing but the name!
Go friends—I would be lonely in my sorrow—
O Sister! canst thou love me? thou her child—
Beautiful Boleyn's daughter! who destroyed
My mother—hapless Queen—dishonoured wife!
Thou too—my brother—spurned from thy throne,
thy deathbed.
O no! I shall go down into my earth
Desolate—unbeloved—I wound thee, sister!
Pardon! I rave—I rave—

ELIZABETH.

Abate this passion!
In very truth I love you—fondly pity—

MARY.

Pity! not pity—give me love or nothing!
I hope not happiness: I kneel for peace.
But no: this crown traitors would rive from me—
Which our great father Harry hath bequeathed
Undimned to us—a righteous heritage—
This crown which we, my sister, must maintain

Or die; this crown true safeguard of our People—
Their charter's seal—crushes our peace for ever.
All crowns, since Christ wore his, are lined with thorns.
Elizabeth! that book-demented Jane
Dares mount our father's throne: these base new lords
(Sprung from our house's fatal policy)
Turn from our nurturing hand to kiss her feet!
Elizabeth! though thousands back the upstart,
With hundreds, only, round us, we will smite her!

ELIZABETH.

I love, and will maintain in front of battle,
This spirit, as befits our house.

MARY.

Ha! ha!
The cross shall lead our battle! In the van
Shall flame the holy sign! Elizabeth!
Thou shalt be with me—thou! albeit thy mother
Bequeathed her misbelief to thee. Beneath
The Cross Pontifical we'll tread to dust
Those sordid Puritans: thou lov'st them not.

Enter FAKENHAM.

Lo, in good time thou comest to register
My vow.

ELIZABETH.

This rage o'ermasters you: yet pause;
Pause 'till with calmer reason—

MARY.

Am I mad?
Think you I'm mad? I have been used to scorn—
Neglect—oppression—self-abasement—aye,
My mother's scorching heritage of woe!
Ha! as I speak, behold—she visits me—
With that fair choir of Angels trooping round her,
And cherub faces, with expanded wings
Upbearing her! O blessed saint! depart not!
Breathe on my cold lips those still cherished
kisses
Which thine in death impressed! Sigh in my ear
Those half articulate blessings, unforgotten,
Which made my childhood less than martyrdom!
I'll clasp thee—Mother!

[*Totters forward and falls.*

ELIZABETH.

Soft: she revives again.
Give no alarm. Observed you this before?

FAKENHAM.

Not thus demented.

ELIZABETH.

You mistake. Her spirit

Though masculine as well becomes a Tudor,
Yet will her fragile body bend in storms.
Already she revives: be prudent, Sir.

MARY [*recovering*].

Good father, why this look of grief? My sister,
A grave rebuke looks coldly from your eye.
Ah well, you smile! you love me in my weakness.
Give me your arm—I need refreshment—sleep.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Open Country in Suffolk.

Enter WYATT, BRETT, *and followers.*

BRETT.

I TELL thee, Wyatt, these my saucy knaves
Of London City brook no tedious parleys.
It addles clearer heads than ours to scan
Your knotty quodlibets, with such a coil
Of clerkly terms, and law-court jargonry,
Citings of title, precedents and cases—
Here Jane—there Mary—well we've ta'en our part,
And here we stand right manfully for Mary.
You bid us wait. 'Sdeath, sir, have we not waited

These twenty hours sans sleep, sans food, sans wine—
Scant welcome for substantial citizens!
I pray you judge this matter reasonably—

WYATT.

The Queen, last night, care-worn and sad, perforce
Declined our audience: in an hour she grants it.

BRETT.

The hours here lost were precious—

WYATT.

Well, they were so—
But here comes Jerningham. What news?

Enter JERNINGHAM *before* MARY, ELIZABETH, *&c.*

JERNINGHAM.

The Queen!

MARY.

We greet you well, our faithful Londoners!
You, Master Brett—and you, Sir Thomas Wyatt.
Why ask ye audience? time it were for action.

WYATT.

We come prepared for deeds; but first, frank speech.
I am too bold I fear me.

MARY.

So fear I.

WYATT.

These men had godly training from their cradles;
And, Madam, before all things they love God.
That they stand here attests their loyalty.
Your Grace's claim is rightful: Lady Jane's
We, on deliberation, disallow.

MARY.

We are beholden to you: but our right
Divine, needs not arbitrement of men.
Say on.

WYATT.

I speak, my liege, as I am charged:
The mouth-piece of these noble hearts, impledged
To back you, but with conscience satisfied.
We grieve to see the royal banner bear
The holy cross with Peter's keys impaled—
An emblem which we dare not march beneath.
I am bound to tell you, madam, we raise not
Our weapons in a cause not wholly righteous:
Wherefore we crave your royal gauge that all things
Which touch the Church, rest as King Edward left them.

MARY.

Gentlemen!—yea, to English Gentlemen
Your Queen, in her extremity of wrong,

Is forced to make appeal. Ye press me hardly.
Pleading your conscience, Sirs, think too of mine.
You grasp at license: take it: but deny not
The liberty ye crave. Little know ye
By what vexations royalty is compassed;
Or what my special trials. You, as yet
Little enforced, are firm. I too am firm:
And firm have stood in dire extremity;
Perilling all for conscience' sake. For this
Will Englishmen desert me? Something moves you—
Why murmur ye aside?

BRETT.

My Lady Queen?
These men of mine, excuse their city habits—
Make much of bargain and securities.
They pray your highness for explicit pledges.

MARY.

Out on ye, men of pelf! shall loyalty
Be measured out at price? with legal phrase
Indentured, and set forth like some vile bond!
You speak as though your Queen stood not on right,
In panoply of arms and regal state;
But, cap in hand, pleaded through her attorney.—
I'll not be interrupted—silence sir!

I scorn to buy my rights. I'll hear no more!
My Lord of Arundel, advance our banner!
Follow for your hereditary faith—
To London—forward!

ARUNDEL.

Wyatt, be our guide:
And Captain Brett shall guard the rear.

BRETT.

Lord Marshal,
The city bands listen no voice but mine.

MARY.

God's death! you dare to parley, Master Brett?
Obey our Marshal—or—

BRETT [*sheathing his sword*].

I march no farther!

WYATT.

Nor I—yet on my knees, I pray you, Madam;
Relent—you will not? Even yet my prayers
Shall be for your success, though in this quarrel
I may not strike.

MARY.

False to thy God art thou,
Deserting thus in presence of the foe!
Yon bartering churls obey their natural instinct.
But thou—of noble blood—Sir! yon's the road
To our revolted Cousin. She, perchance

May hedge her bauble crown with pageant peers.
Go Sir! a coronet, or axe, awaits you.
Begone! you bar our way.

WYATT.

Alas! my liege,
How much you misconceive us time will show.
Come, Master Brett—yet hear me, Arundel:
We march, 'tis true, apart from your main battle,
But yet so near your flank none shall assail it.
[*Turning to Elizabeth.*
I speak in honour; trust me. Gracious Lady
Plead thou.

ELIZABETH.

Arise, I pray: what power have I?

WYATT.

Tell her how many thousand English babes,
Now dancing on their father's knees, shall weep
In orphanage for this—how many wives
Shall tear their widowed locks o'er bloody graves,
If this our Queen let loose upon her land
The dogs of persecution, late chained down,
Insatiate brood of Rome!

MARY.

Now, by the Rood!
This is too much. Arrest him!

ELIZABETH.

Pardon, Sister:
He knows not what he says.

MARY.

Traitor, begone!
For once I spare. Advance, I say, our banner!
Up Tudor Dragon in rebellion's face!
Up, crowned Portcullis, guardian of the right!
Strike for King Harry's memory, loyal soldiers!
Strike for King Harry's daughter, grateful servants!
Strike for the violated law, bold yeomen!
And ye, the church's faithful champions, strike
For the true Cross and the authentic Faith!

[*Exeunt Mary and Elizabeth.*

BRETT.

Now, by all saints and martyrs calendared!
I could half worship such a tameless woman;
All shrewish though she be. With what a spirit
Like thunder-riven cloud her wrath poured forth,
And keen words flared! Ugly and old?—to that
I shall say nay hereafter. Autumn moons
Portend good harvests. Yet, that glance at parting
Flashed, fierce as sunset through a blasted tree!
But hey! look yonder, Wyatt: half your men
Are scampering after her.

WYATT.

I marked, and blame not.
I mar no fortune, and coerce no conscience.
There is a fascination—all have felt it—
When Royalty and Woman join in one;
Austere allegiance softening into love;
And new-born fealty clinging to the heart
Like a young babe that from its mother's bosom
Looks up and smiles.

BRETT.

Trust me, I am much minded
To join her even yet.

WYATT.

It cannot be.
I feel as you do: but I look beyond
The tempting present. She goes forth to conquer:
So strong a heart must conquer—then, what then?
Ah! know you not the indomitable spirit
Which scorns all danger, spurns all compromise,
Is born for stern resolve, deeds pitiless?
All must be feared from spiritual despotism—
The axe, the stake, tortures, apostasy!

BRETT.

Wyatt, I hate you when you play the augur.

WYATT.

The weight is on my heart of coming doom!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The Tower Chapel.

King Edward's *coffin lying in state. Priests, Heralds, Choristers, &c.*

CHOIR.

Woe, woe, unto the people! from our head
The crown hath fallen; our laurel wreath lies dead!
Our vine that yielded shade and fruit
Hath perished from the root!

ANTICHOIR.

The Lord from out his temple spake in vain:
Vainly his prophets threat, his priests complain!
From wisdom all avert the ear;
The froward will not hear!

CHOIR.

We preached God's wrath; and bade without delay,
The carnal heart turn from his evil way.
For surely God's avenging hand
Smites every guilty land.

ANTICHOIR.

And He hath sternly smitten; as of old,
When stout Josiah perished from the fold;
And Jeremiah's deep lament
With Israel's weeping blent.

CHOIR.

Woes have begun; our sorrows multiply;
Our terrors and our penitential cry!
For well we know we but begin
To pluck the fruits of sin.

ANTICHOIR.

But oh! ye sorrow-laden! kneel in prayer
That He, who once redeemed you, still may spare!
The vials of thy wrath no more,
Lord, on thy people pour!

CRANMER.

Weep, though in vain, poor hearts! cry forth your sorrow,
Like mendicants that at the temple gates
Compassion crave from every passenger!
And ye who shroud your grief in your close hearts,
The rather let it stream forth from your eyes;
Eased by the general sympathy.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How's this?
Why these desponding tones? Lives not the
Queen?

A VOICE.

Long live the rightful Queen!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

King Edward dead,
Queen Jane is Queen: I say the rightful Queen.
Your lamentable passion was too loud,
For sadness to lie deep; and ill comports
With heedful loyalty. But be you joyful,
Even in the honoured presence of the dead.
It is the Living, not the Dead who reigns:
Kneel not, then, to the coffin, but the throne.
She comes! ye trumpeters, awake the air
With cheerful clangour, and salute the Queen!

A VOICE.

Is this a place for cheer? O vanity
Of vanities!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Who twice thus dares my anger?

FAKENHAM.

Hereafter I shall speak more plainly. [*Exit.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Seize him!

Enter JANE *as* QUEEN, *led by* LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY, *attended by* DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *&c. &c.*

JANE [*suddenly stopping with a strong shudder*].

What's this? who has done this? a sorry trick
To fright me so!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why looks our Jane so pale?
My Liege—your pardon! I forgot—but why
That blank look on the ground?

JANE [*rubbing her eyes*].

'Tis gone—'tis gone!
Yet no—'tis there again! dread omen!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Give me
Your hand, my liege. [*Aside*] Arouse thee child! remember
The eyes of thousands search thee through and through.
Sleep-walker! must I lead thee?

JANE [*drawing back.*]

No—not there!
I step not there!

NORTHUMBERLAND [*aside*].

Art mad?

JANE.

I think I am—

Mother!

DUCHESS.

My child! what means this terror?

JANE.

Mother!

As I stand here and live, I saw it there.
A bloody axe—there on that floor—It may be—
It was illusion—yes—I know 'twas so—
But I am sorely shaken—Bear with my weakness—
O Mother, O Northumberland! mark now
The issue of your plots. Thou knowest, God!
That I am innocent of this offence!
This crown, this coffin-throne, this phantom-axe,
I sought not,—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Have a care. Pause ere you spurn them.
Each backward step is to your husband's grave.
You are moved: you yield: come on!

JANE.

God succour me!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

[*Leading Jane to the head of the bier.*

Barons of England! Prelates of the Church!
Accept Your Queen! God save Queen Jane of
England!

[*Partial acclamations.*

The Queen is thankful for her people's greeting;
As after deeds shall prove. At her command
I lay, my lords, King Edward's Will before you.
This noble deed, so fraught with prescient wisdom,
Discreet discrimination of the Law,
Regard for ancientness and precedent,
Love for his people rather than his kin,
And, above all, true zeal for holy church,
Shall stand a monument, our christian charter,
Pride of all English hearts. My Lords, I use
No trope of phantasy, bombastic phrase,
But speak plain truth in language plain, affirming
The Nation's with the Church's weal bound up,
Both with this Queen's succession. Take this deed,
Lawfully drawn, authentically vouched;
And here delivered to the assembled State
In presence of the Dead, whom we adjure,
And of the living Princess whom we serve.
Peers, Knights, and Burgesses, behold your
Queen!

KING AT ARMS.

Hear all ye people! Look upon your Queen!
The high and mighty Princess, Lady Jane,
Grand-daughter of your late King Henry the
seventh,
By right of blood, and by King Edward's will,
Queen of this realm of England, France and
Ireland,
Defender of the Faith! God save the Queen!

CHAMPION OF ENGLAND.

[*Throwing down his glove.*

Which I avouch against all adversaries!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And I make good against a host in arms!

[*Partial acclamations.*

FAKENHAM.

Hear me, ye men of England! Hear, Jane Grey,
One honest, faithful voice.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Back, miscreant! darest thou
Withhold her title from the Lord's anointed?

FAKENHAM.

Anointed not—nor will be! a vain title,
Blown like a bubble from the popular breath,
Makes not a Queen: but lineal blood, liege love,
And consecration by the Church—that Church

Which on the rock stands firm, and holds the keys!
I fear you not, Duke of Northumberland!
My trust is God—and, under God, this Lady;
A victim, not a traitress!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Seize, and slay him!
What ho! the Captain of the Guard!

PEMBROKE.

Not so—
My son is not an executioner.
Pause, good my Lord: this passion shakes her Grace.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Bar not my way!

PEMBROKE.

The time, the place, the presence!
A brawl of blood before the coffined King,
And a throned Queen! [*To Herbert*] Remove the fanatic
Make room for the regalia!

Officers enter with the regalia; which they present kneeling. The Nobility then come forward, orderly, to perform homage.

NORTHUMBERLAND [*kneeling*].

In the name

Of England's Peerage, I salute the Queen;
And, kneeling on this consecrated earth,
Do swear—

PEMBROKE [*sneeringly*].

Not consecrated earth, my Lord!
Her Grace's foot is on Anne Boleyn's grave--
And yours on the Protector Somerset's!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Accursed night of omens! [*Starting up.*

PEMBROKE.

Pardon, my Lord,—
Her Grace expects the interrupted oath.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I'll have no more! break up the ceremony—
What noise is that?

PEMBROKE.

Something hath moved the crowd.
Silent it stood but late in street and court
With upturned faces gleaming to the moon;
So motionless and passive, their inaction
Trust me, was awful. Now their coldness thaws;
And, like a snow-slip down the mountain side,
Thundering they rush, choking the narrow ways.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Event treads down event—Shut gates! up draw-bridge!

Enter a Warder accompanied by a Courier.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What slave thus startles our solemnities?
Bird of ill omen, speak!

COURIER.

Sir Edward Hastings—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ha! what of Hastings? I much trusted Hastings—
With manifold commissions—

COURIER.

He hath joined
The Lady Mary, with four thousand men.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Lay hands upon his brother Huntingdon!

Enter a second Courier.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Varlet! what evil croak is thine?

SECOND COURIER.

Your ships,
Which lately buffeted the German sea,
By stress of tempests driven to Yarmouth roads,
Have yielded to Sir Henry Jerningham.

Enter a third Courier.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What—more disasters?

THIRD COURIER.

The Lord Grey of Wilton
Bade me report, the Earls of Bath, and Surrey,
Joined to Sir William Drury, Sir John Skelton,
And others, men of note, proclaim Queen Mary.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Their heads shall wither on these towers for this!—
Arm, arm, my Lords! Rebellion is in arms!
And like a reptile must be trod to death.
Suffolk! tis thine to lead thy daughter's battle,
To victory—to vengeance!

PEMBROKE.

Hear calm counsel.
Madam, your father ought to guard your person.
No heart so loving, and no faith so trusty,
As is a father's. Furthermore, where arms
In the ranged field must arbitrate, a Leader
Of marked renown should guide: one whose known pennon
Shakes terror from its folds. Northumberland
Is Captain of the age.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I go not. Madam,
The soul of safety severs from its body
If I depart. Within this city lurk

Malcontent spirits, that will mount to mischief.
Let Suffolk lead.

SUFFOLK.

Pembroke's advice seems wise.
Guilford approves.

GUILFORD.

I ride forth with my father
To smite this false Bellona!

JANE.

Spare me, Dudley!
My judgement is at fault. Northumberland,
The council's will be our's: Go forth to conquer;
If conquest, in this cause, indeed be just.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Are your eyes stricken with judicial blindness?
Or masks this show of zeal some dark intent
That dares not face me forth? So be it. I go!
But ye who stay, remember, Dudley's sword,
Two-edged, can smite false friend or open foe.

PEMBROKE.

Point you at me, Lord Duke?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I point at no man.
O, my good Lord! let not the unaccused
By self-excuses seem as self accused—
Madam, at your command I go. [*Aside*] Hark,
Guilford!—

Watch Winchester: and if you find him false,
Chain him up like a hound. For Pembroke—
mark—
If you suspect him—if you but suspect—
Crush him—as I this beetle! [*Aloud*] Peers of
England!
As I comport myself, guard you the Queen.
[*Exit Northumberland attended.*

JANE.

I would be private, for brief space; to pray
Beside these loved remains.

[*All retire except Lord Guilford, the Duchess and Fakenham, who kneels, unobserved at the bier.*

JANE [*kneeling*].

Poor pomp of woe! ghastly magnificence!
Beneath that veil what fearful sight lies hidden?
I dare not pry into thy depths, O grave!
For oh! those eyes, so sweet, severe, are glazed;
Those lips that were so eloquently wise,
That brain so stored before its time, that heart
Pure as a fountain of celestial love.
Cold are they now—dead, dead! Pardon, dear
Shade!
The feeble form that dares enact thy greatness.
Not mine that choice, O brother of my soul!
No lust of power unsexed, nor idle gauds

Betrayed my woman's heart: the public weal,
Thy will, alone, compelled; dragging me hither,
To pine, a pageant Queen—or—God have mercy!
Sink an abortive traitor to these vaults
Whose every pavement is the monument
Of public crime avenged.

GUILFORD.

You rave, my Jane!
These shadows vex your brain.

FAKENHAM.

I charge you, stay!
Daughter, I heard, rejoicing—in my heart
Thy passionate pleading sank, sacred as thoughts
Breathed in confessional. Hear in return
The voice of God. The Heaven to which I point
Attests my truth, and I adjure the dead;
Laying my hand upon his coffined dust!
Treason—and ye have overstepped its verge—
Treason, the Judas crime, that, in itself,
Includes all other horrors that deform
The angelic guise of Man—this sin strikes home
To Heaven itself: for Majesty divine
His own imperial type vouchsafes to earth!
Ay, Kings are by God's ordination fixed
On pedestals so fenced with faith and worship,
Compassed with sacramental oaths and incense,

That to deface, obstruct, or counterfeit
Is of the Church accursed, by human law
Banned without pity, and avenged by God.
Hear me, fair child! more sinned against than sinful—
Time yet remains for penitence.

JANE [*flying to her Mother*].

O shield me!

Re-enter NORTHUMBERLAND *attended.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How's this? Pernicious Priest! we meet again.
You prophesied these vaults—foresaw the scaffold.

FAKENHAM.

The spirit that was then, is now upon me.
The block is near, but which shall be the victim,
Which witness I discern not.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Juggler, Wizard!
The flames shall purge that spirit—Jane, your hand—
Your's, Guilford—I must speak one hurried word
Ere treacherous tasks part us, perhaps for ever.
This soft hand, Jane, unaided, is too weak
To uphold the sceptre; and this polished brow
To bear an unsupported diadem.

'Twere well the matrimonial throne were shared.
Young though he be, my son's strong temperament,
And subtlety—that's his inheritance—
Boldly shall shield it. You speak not—Kneel, Guilford!
Kneel to your Queen for safety: supplicate
Your wife for thus much love.

JANE.

Strengthen me, God!
Support my fond, weak nature. No, dear husband!
This may not be—no royal blood is thine—
No subject can ascend the throne—the Law
Forbids it as a crime.

GUILFORD.

Love can do much—
Straining, not wresting law. Fathers of kings
Are not unworthy crowns they can transmit.

JANE.

Guilford! I love thee fondly: but this thing
I dare not—will not do.

FAKENHAM.

O noble creature!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Dog, if thou barkest I will strike thee dead.

FAKENHAM.

Strike, if it be permitted thee: if not,
The angel of the Lord can burst these walls,
And free his servant, as he freed of old
The apostle Peter! I defy thee!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Marry!
They spoiled in thee a marvellous good player,
Making a monk. Remove him! Queen! farewell!
Lack-wits are castaways betimes.

GUILFORD.

Farewell!

JANE.

Abandoned by my husband? God have pity!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Guilford, remain; or all is lost. I join
Your hands. Forgive her. All may yet go well.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Street in Cambridge.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I HAVE plunged too deep. The current of the times
Hath been ill-sounded. Frosty discontent
Breathes chilly in the face of our attempt:
And, like the dry leaves in November winds,
These summer-suited friends fly my nipped branches.
What's to be done? Time, like a ruthless hunter,
Tramples my flying footsteps! banned and baited
By my own pack, dogs fed from mine own hand
Gnash fangs and snarl on me! Palmer! what ho!

Enter SIR JOHN PALMER.

Thine eyes are downcast—heavy falls thy step—
Sure token of bad tidings.

PALMER.

Ah! my Lord,
Let me advise—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Advise me no advice!
Let me know facts. Will our men fight—or
march?
At least will they disband? You shake your head.

PALMER.

Indeed, my lord, the signs of disaffection
Are manifold. Some stalk with sullen brow
Musing apart: some gather in pale knots
Whispering with sidelong glances: some stride
boldly,
Attesting men and saints that you betray them.
In vain have I assayed all flatteries:
At threats they laugh.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Good Palmer, threaten not:
Sooth rather—We must change our course, my
friend.

PALMER.

Too late!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What other hope remains? I thought
To loose a tempest on the Tudor's head:

But like a summer shower it melts away.
Too bright the sunshine of true loyalty
Flames in our eyes. The sword fails: we must
kneel.

PALMER.

You should have weighed this ere you goaded us
To this alternative. The lion's paw
Is terrible to those who fly, or grovel.
Are you not moved?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I have been Fortune's mate,
So long, my friend, I trust not in her smiles—
Fear not her frown. I tell thee, Fortune's wheel
O'er the subjected world of men and things
Shall yet roll onward, bearing Dudley's Fates.
If time hold out, at worst one friend remains—
Our Adversary's madness! That shall avail
More than our best of wit. I know this Mary:
But the world, knowing not, made her an Idol.
She shall be known ere long. I bide my time.
Here part we—save thyself. [*Exit Palmer.*
Now wit befriend me!
These Malcontents!—still will I march their leader,
And be the first to hail her Queen. If spared,
With jibe for jibe I meet short-witted knaves:
He who would rise bends while the tempest raves.

Scene II.

Wanstead Heath.

Enter Mary, Elizabeth, Arundel, *&c.*

ARUNDEL.

Heaven smiles, my liege, upon the righteous cause.
Welcome thus far upon your prosperous way.
Here rest your wearied foot—your foes disperse
Frail as the dust before their giddy feet.

MARY.

How name you this fair prospect?

ARUNDEL.

Wanstead Heath:
By Epping chase.

MARY.

How blest these breezy downs,
With purple heath and golden gorse enamelled;
Each bosky bank with dewy windflowers strewn,
Each dell with cowslip and rathe violet—
And the sun-loving daisy on hill tops
Drinking the light! Ah, happy shepherd's life!
He this sweet solitude, without constraint,
Explores, his chosen damsel at his side:

Recounting tales of love and plighted faith:
Or from his pipe pours such delicious song
That the wild hare in the close bitten lane
Pauses with ear erect, and timorous deer
That down the labyrinthine forest glade
Goes bounding, starts aside, and turns to gaze.

ELIZABETH.

Old times return—discourse for ever thus.

MARY.

Beneath this chesnut canopy, sun-proof,
Cool as a cavern on the ocean shore,
I'll take my rest.

ELIZABETH.

Not new to me this scene.
Oft have I chased the red deer through these wilds,
With our loved Edward.

MARY.

Saints be with him now!
He loved you, Bess: not me the unbeloved!

ELIZABETH.

He loved you well till traitors edged between.
God pardon him.

MARY.

And them! Preserve me, Lord,
From the vindictive Fiend that tempts my spirit.

ELIZABETH.

Forswear sad thoughts. In fancy let us rove
These downs and coverts. From yon breezy brow,
Like a monk's head close-shaven, with boscage
fringed,
Oft have I watched Paul's steeple, o'er the smoke
Of the great City glistering like a pyre.
Along the horizon spread the billowy tops
Of Hainault's forest oaks: nor far uprears
The Fairlop tree his huge trunk, grey and bossy;
A mighty shade, where village maids at eve
In dance and song with rural archers sport.

[*A distant Trumpet sounds.*

ARUNDEL.

The hart is near the toils. Thoughtless of fate,
I hear his wanton belling on the wind.

Enter WINCHESTER *and* PEMBROKE.

MARY.

You are welcome.

PEMBROKE.

On our knees we sue for pardon:
For that, long hampered in false Dudley's meshes,
We stood aloof, in mock disloyalty.
Praise be to God! the summer Sun hath risen
To dry our tearful cheeks. God save the Queen!

MARY.

Well have I known your hearts were dutiful
Albeit your outward carriage was unliegeful.
Let worthy posts, Lord Marshal, be assigned
them! [*Great shouting heard.*

ARUNDEL.

Fortune comes bounding on a flowing tide.

MARY.

What means this tumult?

ARUNDEL.

Dudley's ill-sorted Bands
Have flung their arms aside; and hither rush,
Frenzied with loyal zeal.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND *with Soldiery in disorder.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Hold back! this ardour
Shall fright the Queen, not please her! Thus,
my men! [*Throwing up his cap.*
God save Queen Mary!

MARY.

Down with your sword! what mean you?
Me thou can'st neither frighten nor cajole.
Kneel, traitor, kneel!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Lowly to earth abased,
A penitent sincere, I crave your mercy!
I might have lived an exile; but prefer
To stoop my forfeit head and trust your pity.
Too well my momentary treason (yea
Treason it seems till you have read my soul)
Deserves death. Yet considerately judge
Confessed infirmity; remembering mercy,
That best prerogative of Royalty!
The common herd— [*Pauses.*

MARY.

Nay, let your say be said.
You have license, Sir; proceed.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I cannot harm you—
But can well serve. For I have piloted
The state so long that all its perilous leaks
And privy treasons are to me revealed,
And shall to your Grace if this poor life be spared.

MARY.

My Lord, I muse much at your strange appeal:
And shall take counsel on it.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Not with my foes!
So were I crushed to screen their double treason.

Your gracious nature knows not to delude.
Trust your own wisdom. Give me hope!

MARY.

To live
In righteous hope needs hope beyond this world.
They only who serve God in his true Church
Partake that blessing. Sir, you should have hope:
But you have served, till now, whom hope disowns.
I shall revolve your suit. My Lord, retire.
Keep him in ward, not rigorous, but observant.

[*Exit Queen Mary, attended.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

My title she withholds not. That is well.
And when she lectured of the hope men feel
Who serve in the true Church, her eye had meaning,
Beyond her words. True Church? there's food herein
For cautious meditation.

ARUNDEL.

Please you, my Lord,
We must proceed. Time presses. Forward, my men! [*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The Great Hall of the Tower.

Enter Jane *with* Guilford.

JANE.

Midnoon—yet silent as midnight! my heart
Flutters and stops—flutters and stops again—
As in the pauses of a thunder storm;
Or a bird cowering during an eclipse.
Alone, through these deserted halls we wander,
Bereft of friends and hope. Speak to me, Guilford.

GUILFORD.

Thy heart-strings, Jane, strengthened by discipline,
Endure the strain.

JANE.

Say rather, my Religion
Hath taught this good. Nor lacks our female nature
Courage to meet inevitable woe
With a beloved one shared.

GUILFORD.

I cannot bear this!
Is no one near? My throbbing brain will burst!

Not one of all those courtling servitors
Who thronged this hall but yesternight? Heaven's curse
Palsy their servile souls—smirkers and cringers!
Where are they now? Gone like foul fogs to choke
The morn they hail.

JANE.

Such is men's deem of us.
We have obscured a dawn! If spared, God grant
We may make bright the Queen's triumphant way
Like clouds that glorify the wake of noon.

GUILFORD.

Away this specious wisdom! it but goads me!
Kiss me, sweet Jane! Soothe me with loving words—
Breathing warm fancies, nectared as thy breath!
One passionate embrace may stifle thought.
But this cool meekness stings me. [*Embracing her.*

JANE [*withdrawing hastily*].

Ah, for pity!
Is this a time? We should concentrate thought,
Not dissipate—make strong our hearts, not weaken.

GUILFORD.

What would you have?

JANE.

Be all a man should be—
A Christian man, a loyal gentleman!

GUILFORD.

And you?

JANE.

I am content to die with you.

GUILFORD.

Jane! I'm not worthy of you.

JANE.

Nay, dear Love,
Say not so—think not so. I am too bold—
Indeed I was too bold: and 'twas not wife-like
So to repulse you—See, my father comes.
What news, my father?

Enter DUKE *and* DUCHESS *of* SUFFOLK.

SUFFOLK.

Dudley too falls from us.
He was the first of all that craven crew
In Epping Chase to cry "God save Queen Mary!"
Foul Traitor!

JANE.

O my Husband! I forgive him.
And thou—resent not that my Father chafes.

SUFFOLK.

Daughter, the time is come when you must doff

This regal style and ill-beseeming state:
The ceremonials, now the exequies,
Of your departed greatness.

JANE.

Sir, far better
Brook I this order, than my forced advancement.
Too dutiful a daughter, I forgot
A subject's duty, when, at your behest,
Reluctantly, yea sinfully, I wore them.
Take back the crown. Even yet a prompt submission
May quit my great offence. Go then, my Father,
Seek out the Council. In our names renounce
This treason. Plead, while the Queen's gracious heart
Melts in this summer solstice of success.

DUCHESS.

Simple as wise, thy counsels now shall guide us.
Haste we! the growing tumult in the street
Heralds the Queen.

SUFFOLK.

Beloved Jane! pray for us.
For thou alone art fit to call on God!

[*Exeunt Duke and Duchess.*

Enter FAKENHAM, *who approaches* JANE.

FAKENHAM.

Daughter, your hand!—Excuse a poor monk, Sir,
Who not unused to royalty, makes bold
To pity one who must lay down a crown:
To reverence one whose virtues would have
graced it:
To comfort one who, having worn it wrongly,
Bows her meek spirit to the chastisement.
I take your hand: and—what I would not do
In your prosperity—with bended knee,
Kiss humbly; paying to your spiritual brightness
That homage which your grandeur could not win.

JANE.

Fakenham! true minister of Christ art thou!
Fearless of danger in discharge of duty;
And to the mourner prodigally kind.

FAKENHAM.

Perhaps I can be serviceably kind.
I am your witness that your will was thrall
To ever-blinding love; mistaken duty.
You both are very young—you and your
husband:
And he so wrought on that his dazzled eyes
Saw haloes and mock suns where'er they turned.

I who have known the world, and knowing,
spurned it,
Who for myself would dare, for others invoke,
The worst of temporal suffering if thereby
Fruition might be won of joys immortal,
I warn you, by no quibble seek to ward
Right judgement. Plead your kindred: sue for
mercy—
God give you light and grace!

JANE.

My conduct, Sir,
Shall be to your advice conformable.

FAKENHAM.

The council freed me; rendering all the captives
Unto my charge. Ah, precious were those souls
That pined so long for the pure air of heaven!
These have I called to meet the Queen: and thus
Make Liberty the first fruits of her reign.

Enter EXETER, GARDINER, BONNER, TONSTALL, *&c.*

O worthy gentlemen! I greet you well!

GARDINER.

Thee first, O Lord! we bless for this great mercy!
Through intercession of good saints vouchsafed!
To thee too, blessed Virgin! we give thanks,

For life, for liberty, for heaven restored;
And holy Church thus justified in us!
Good Fakenham—chosen instrument—receive
The Church's benediction!

FAKENHAM.

I am thankful.
Thine this peace-offering, Lady! May the Queen
Accept the precious gift with spirit appeased!

JANE.

O Guilford, hope!

GUILFORD.

It may not be: this man
Deceives himself, or us; the very captives,
Whom we had spared, pass us with looks averted.
Jane, we must brave the worst!

JANE.

Endure it, Guilford!

A salute of trumpets: acclamations: the castle gate is opened. Enter QUEEN MARY *in warlike habiliments, with* ELIZABETH: *preceded by a large golden cross. Also* ARUNDEL, WINCHESTER, PEMBROKE, SUFFOLK, *with his* DUCHESS. *Other Lords, Heralds, and Soldiers.*

MARY.

Here plant the Cross—staff of our pilgrimage!

The pillared cloud at noon, and flame by night,
That cheered my fainting heart, and made me
fearless. [*She kneels before the Cross.*
Type of our Faith! awful expositor
Of mysteries unspeakable! thou leading,
Have I not followed with untiring hope,
Taintless fidelity? Have I not dared
Dangers from open foes, from friends estranged,
Hateful suspect even on my household floor,
Perils of death, perils of mine own heart—
And in my brain—threatening my very soul?
Yet do I not for this, O Virgin Mother!
Arrogate glory. Honour to thee! who hither—
Even to my Father's hall, hast led me victor;
Calm, though much moved; exulting yet not
proud:
By triumph undebased. [*Rising*]. Fakenham—
good father!
Servant of the Most High, in his name, hail!
These are thy liberated captives? Well
Hast thou performed thy dangerous offices.
Bid them come near. O venerable Prelates!
Scarce less than Martyrs, ye I first salute.
Gardiner! uplift the cross once more in Winton.
Tonstall! take back thy staff to Durham. Bonner!
Be mitred chief of this proud city again.

My Lord of Norfolk, with much joy I greet you;
First of our English Barons. You, fair cousin
Of Exeter, come hither—Ha! long years
Of durance have not dimmed thy soft brown eyes,
Nor streaked with silver thread thy chestnut curls.
I marvel at thy freshness, gracious youth,
Young as thou art; for prisoned years count
double.
Lead me, dear cousin, to my throne: now kneel.
Rise up, Sir Edward Courtenaye, Knight of St.
George!
Fakenham, what wouldst thou say?

FAKENHAM.

Receive, my Liege,
These captives from a hand, that, seeming guilty,
Is yet most pure. From this unhappy Lady
Accept this priceless boon.

JANE.

Pardon, sweet Cousin!
Pardon, wronged Queen! Let my compunction
wake
Pity, yet slumbering in your woman's heart.
You turn away!—then God be my support!

FAKENHAM.

Beware!

JANE.

Ah Sir! too gently have you judged me.
Usurper of the consecrated crown,
The sacred sceptre, how can I be pure?
Welcome Adversity, lifter up of veils!
Before me, naked as a soul for judgement,
Stands up my sin. 'Tis well! the worst is o'er!
Suffer I must; but I will sin no longer!
Can you forget?—dare you forgive? If not
I bow, a penitent resigned.

FAKENHAM.

Great Queen!
At this most hallowed moment shed not blood!
Do I presume?

MARY.

Sir, you presume. Your station
Is our confessional. There, as a daughter,
I stand submiss—your Sovereign here. These nobles,
These prelates are my lawful council. These
I can rely on, and my proper self.
Who dreamed I was athirst for blood? God's death!
An if I were—or if the general weal—
Or if the people's cry—or if the Church,
Uttering the voice of Heaven, demanded,—who
Should stay my hand?

FAKENHAM.

Alas! I say no more.

MARY.

You have said too much. Competitors for thrones
For ever lose the rights of privacy.
If tools of faction, what avail their virtues?
They represent opinion; are its leaders—
And must confront the peril they provoke;
The penalty that gnaws the heart of treason;
Promethean pangs which the roused Majesty
Of Heaven inflicts on those who grasp its fires!

FAKENHAM [*aside.*]

The demon wakes within her heart: yet hope.
I wait a milder moment.

MARY.

Duke of Suffolk!
Your case—and yours, madam, my cousin, differ
From your bad daughter's. We commit to you
Her custody—beware you break not trust—
But separate from her husband.

JANE [*kneeling*].

Part us not!

MARY.

Separate from her husband; and confined
Within these walls. What grace soe'er we yield

To you, extends not to this guilty couple.
They answer their offence. No more. Depart.

[*Exeunt Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, Lady Jane, and Lord Guilford Dudley.*

Your hand, my Sister. Exeter, take this
Your Sovereign's hand; and this her fairer sister's.
Lead forward: be henceforth our chamberlain.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

A Street in London.

Enter Bedingfield *and* Jerningham.

JERNINGHAM.

The Queen hath won her own: the kingdom peace.
May both wax prosperous! but to that end
Means must be found agreeable to Heaven.
I do not think her Grace assured in health.
What if she die—die childless?

BEDINGFIELD.

Heresy
Will triumph with reaction terrible.
Not Jane, nor yet Elizabeth will spare.

JERNINGHAM.

She should be urged to marry.

BEDINGFIELD.

Whom?

JERNINGHAM.

I know not.
Some English gentleman—say Exeter,
From prisoned boyhood grown to gracious manhood.

BEDINGFIELD.

Her father slew his father. Blood cements not
Fabricks of love. Besides, captivity
Hath left him scant of knowledge.

JERNINGHAM.

Comely he is,
And stately in his presence—gracefully bows—
Talks nothings airily—is affable—
He lacks not what shall please a woman's eye.

BEDINGFIELD.

A Queen who loves her people, seeks in wedlock,
A counsellor to guide her troubled hours.
Will Exeter be such?

JERNINGHAM.

There is a man,
Whose royalty of soul outstrips his birth—
Whose youthful graces pleased her maiden fancy
Long years agone; ere yet an honest frankness
Drove him, a fugitive, from Henry's hate—

Reginald de la Pole.

BEDINGFIELD.

The Cardinal?

Alas that one word clips the wings of hope!

JERNINGHAM.

No. The last vow, which bars him from the world,

He hath not ta'en. Pole would adorn a crown.

BEDINGFIELD.

Religion fills his heart. No room for love!

Courtenaye is near; and opportunity

Feathers Love's arrow. She will take the wound.

JERNINGHAM.

Has ta'en—if I see rightly. Marked you not

Her mien—her eyes—her smiles—her gracious words—

When first they met.

BEDINGFIELD.

Yes—he will be her choice.

JERNINGHAM.

What if he choose not her? Have you not marked

His eyes are on the Princess, while his tongue

Waits on the Queen.

BEDINGFIELD.

Thou hast the trick of courts.

The double dealer still sees double meanings.

JERNINGHAM.

May all end well! But much my mind misgives me.
Equals in age, Time, as it flies, endears;
But pairs ill-matched, dispart with parting years.

Scene V.

The Queen's *Cabinet.*

Enter Mary, Arundel, Gardiner.

MARY.

These orders expedite. I shall preside
At this great trial.

ARUNDEL.

Doth it please your Grace
That all shall be arraigned to-day—or each
Called separately to plead?

MARY.

Each separately:
But all confronted. Hark you—there are rumours
Of tumults in the city; gatherings
Of sottish malcontents in hostelries;
And fanatick preachments in the Queen's high-
way.
Let the Queen's Sheriffs look to this. I brook

No nightmare wonderments—no babbling
brooders
Over small plots: wring off the heads of such.
It is reported that Sir Thomas Wyatt
In Suffolk speaks great things: admonish him:
And that one Captain Brett his mouth enlarges,
Among swash-bucklers, prentices, and gownsmen,
Against our rights. Cut me this license short.
I know this Brett; a dangerous man, who parleys
With treason, and consorts with hereticks;
A man without respect for forms or persons.
Your office puts into your hand a sword
To smite such evils. Let it be done.

GARDINER.

Dread Madam,
The voice that I shall speak with to offenders,
Pitched at your tone, shall make the guilty
tremble! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Great Hall of the Tower, as a Court.

Enter QUEEN MARY, *attended by* GARDINER *as Chancellor*, NORFOLK *as High Steward*, ARUNDEL *as Earl Marshal*, CRANMER, PEMBROKE, WINCHESTER, *&c. After these*, JANE GREY *and* LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY, *with* DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, *as prisoners, preceded by the Headsman carrying the axe with its edge from them.* DUKE *and* DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *&c.*

MARY [*from the Throne.*]

OPEN the court! Norfolk, High Steward presiding.

GARDINER.

I stand before your Highness and your Barons
Accuser of these Lords, and this sad Lady,
Of treasons, so notoriously sustained
By overt acts and speech we need not witness.
But something I must say touching the root

Of these offences. I have somewhere read
That in the Indian isles there grows a tree
Of goodliest aspect, spreading to the sun
A canopy of shade so redolent
Of odours, and attractive in that clime
By its inviting coolness, that the unwary
Are tempted to their ruin: for within
The beauty of that bower lurks Death: the air
Draws poison from its bloom, and all it shelters
Die! in that tree behold this criminal!
He in young Edward's court fatally flourished!
Our nobles sat within his shade, and perished!
Witness for me that princely Somerset,
The King's own uncle, noblest of the land!
What need to sum his wiles, rapacities?
Ye exiles, and extinguished hearths, make answer!
Sprung from a tainted stock, behold him leap,
As at a bound, even to the height of all!
From knighthood to a dukedom—favourite—
Sole minister of the inexperienced King:—
Managing all, responsible for all—
(Ah there we touch you, Sir,—responsible!)
Alone in power, alone you must account.
But why waste breath on petty crimes like these?
To mount the throne for him were past all compass:
But Sire of Kings he might be. Therefore he
matched

His son to Lady Jane, a royal maiden;
Threatening the throne with dangerous approach.
The King might die? the royal sisters fall
By monstrous fictions of wrenched law o'er-
powered!
The King might die! Alas! the King did die!
Died opportunely!—But I abstain. Not now
Is that foul deed in question—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Foully you strike!
Hinting my life away, branding my fame
With rumours vile, and lying as the lips
That utter them!

NORFOLK.

You must be silent, Sir,
You shall be heard in your defence.

GARDINER.

That question
May well be pretermitted: but the fact
Is not, and cannot be, denied, he made
Or sought to make his son's wife Queen of Eng-
land.
How he so practised on the dying King
I show not forth. The matter, not the manner,
Was the sufficient crime. Nor moot we here
The royal right to alter the succession.

Enough, the late King was deceived, enforced;
And, in the very agony of death,
Knew not his acts. My Lord of Canterbury!
You, who were present, know that this is true.
But why to you, or meaner personages,
Refer? The Queen saw; and can testify.

MARY.

I witnessed at the death-bed of my brother
Scenes of foul fraud and force; the prisoner present,
A busy agent—he will not deny it.

GARDINER.

My Lords! Religion was the plea for this.
Religion, a wide cloak for godless knaves!
What, knew they not the apostolick rule
That men are bound to obey even sinful Princes?
Who dares insinuate that our Queen's right rule
Shall be a snare for conscience? Hypocrites!
Why claim ye toleration, yet refuse it?
Faith your perpetual cry, yet would ye stifle
That Faith which is the trust of other hearts.
Your Bible is your Idol: all must bow
Before your exposition of its sense,
Or forfeit all—the very throne!—blind plotters!
To shun pretended dangers ye have plunged
Into assured destruction. Now, behold!

Irrevocable crime stands up for judgment!
My Lords, I claim your sentence!

NORFOLK.

Lady Jane,
And you, Lord Guilford Dudley, are you guilty?

JANE.

Strengthen me Thou who helpest all in trouble!
Flush my pale lips with truth—let fear not sully
My royal blood, fount of perpetual sorrow!
I wake from the vain dream of a blind sleep,
Nothing to hide, nothing extenuate.
My Lords, reverse to me this good hath brought,
That I who dimly saw, now plainly see,
And seeing loathe my fault, and loathing, leave it.
The bolts of heaven have split the aspiring tower
Of my false grandeur; and through every rent
The light of heaven streams in. Bear with me further—
I am ashamed to speak in such a presence—
But there is one—my dear, dear husband,—spare him!
One victim should suffice. My great offence
Needs expiation: I am here to make it.
My Lords, this day shall stand in English annals
For ever memorized; establishing
The law's dominion and the rightful rule.

In time to come it shall be known, ambition
Was not my nature though it makes my crime.
I waste your leisure—pardon me—I've done.
One grace alone I crave—in mercy weigh
My husband's sore temptation—spare my husband!

FAKENHAM [*aside*].

She rises from the sea of her great trouble,
Like a pure infant glowing from the bath!

GUILFORD.

I too, my Lords, am guilty. Nought but youth,
And sad misguidance, and connubial love
Extenuate my guilt. I kneel for mercy!

NORFOLK.

Does my Lord Duke plead as his son hath pleaded?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

No! he hath pleaded as his fate constrains:
Albeit my limbs thereby are doubly shackled.
Madam! to you I turn. Trial by peers
Cannot to me be just. Of those who judge
How many are my noted foes!

PEMBROKE.

Not I!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ha! the vexed adder hisses! Well, my Lords!
If this be treason (which if rightly construed

By motives, as sure documents shall prove,
Might bear a milder name) shall men sit there,
There on that bench, once my accomplices?
It was no treason at the King's command,
To stablish the King's will by force of Law!
If treason, then it was not mine alone,
Who joined what all approved—

PEMBROKE.

You prompting them!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Are you both judge and witness? Sacred honour!
Can such things be? That act of council bears
Its attestation in its signatures.
Give me the instrument. What names are here?
Some before mine. Here Thomas Cantuar;—
Here Marquis Winchester, Lord Treasurer,—
Here—worthy—Pembroke; and his son Lord
Herbert,
The captain of the guard to Lady Jane.
Why, my Lords, sit you there, if I stand here?—
The reverend Prelate, labouring with dark tropes,
Spake of a poison tree—pointing at me
His sorry wit: if he implies by this
That in my heart this plot had origin,
I will not say he lies—my poor condition,
His office, bar that taunt—but I say this,

He wrongs me. Fanatick I have not been;
Nor disputant: too little versed am I
Even in the grammar of the science divine,
To make theology rebellion's text,
Or for my flag hang out a preacher's gown!
Too much my youth, devoted to my Prince,
And later life to labours of the State
Have turned my thoughts from heaven. Now on life's verge
With aching heart I stand, bound to clear up
Doubts that have long oppressed me. I have done.
Well know I that these judges will condemn me—
But thou, most pious Queen, pity my soul!

NORFOLK.

Barons of England you have heard. How say you?
Are these who stand accused before you guilty?

PEMBROKE.

Guilty, upon my honour!

ALL.

Guilty, guilty!

NORFOLK.

What doth her Grace award?

MARY.

The Law says—Death!

JANE.

O mercy for my husband!

MARY.

Jane, my People—
This realm of England—must have peace. Alas!
Too clearly I foresee peace and thy life
Are inconsistent things. Nathless, thy doom
Shall not be hurried. Time for thee—for me—
Must be reserved. Let sentence be recorded.
Against this hapless pair—no warrant written.
Sir John of Dudley! titles, wealth, domains,
Henceforth you forfeit: which may yet be shared
Among your worthier sons. That conscience-
stricken
You do repent your spiritual misdeeds
We much rejoice to learn. The dean of Paul's
Our confessor shall yield you ghostly counsel.
Break up the court! you are released, my Lords!—
Come hither, Exeter! I would confer
With thee some half hour hence—in private—
take
My hand. Adieu! till then.

[*Exeunt Mary, Elizabeth, Nobles and others.*

NORTHUMBERLAND [*aside to Guilford.*]

Did you mark that?
My Lords, if one yet mindful of old times
Can heed a fallen man's prayer, I crave short
audience:

Lord Exeter, you are no foe, I think—
Will you vouchsafe brief speech?

EXETER.

I am your servant.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Courtenaye—you owe no wrong to me—nay, rather,
Friendship—well, call it service, if you will.
Service I claim, and you can yield. Observe me:
I hailed you once Plantagenet; you are so;
Heir of the house of York: and what of that?
I move you to no treason—start not, Sir!
We are watched—stand nearer. The Queen loves you, Courtenaye!
Tut man! I know it. Hear me patiently.

EXETER.

You try my patience, I confess.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

So be it.
Yet had I marvelled, if the man I spake to
In presence of yon headsman—you remember?—
Had checked me harshly. You, Plantagenet,
Loved by the Queen (ay, marry, and the Princess)
Must blend your pure blood with her doubtful strain.

EXETER.

Sir, this is idle.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Not a whit—if you
Spurn not kind fortune: trample not your friends.
Your ear. The Queen, I grant you, is "no beauty
Unless age makes one!"—The Arragonian wears
A diadem, what though she be "a whelp!"
You mark?—or say you, take "chaste Boleyn's babe"—
She suits you best, and you affect her most—
But she is not the Queen. Take Mary Tudor!

EXETER.

My Lord! I see your drift.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ha! ha! you speak
With due respect once more. Fair be the omen!

EXETER.

What can I do?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

When, ere an hour hath passed,
You shall receive her troth-plight, think of me.
Obtain—she'll not deny it then—my pardon.
Thenceforth am I your serviceable friend.
Farewell! I wait her Grace's confessor.
Ere I unload my grief 'twere wise to send me
Good tidings. On your conduct I mould mine.

EXETER.

I'll hope the best for you.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And to the best?

EXETER.

I'll do it.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Princely Exeter! For this
These halls shall echo yet thy Dudley's shout—
God save King Edward of that name the seventh!

[*Exeunt severally, Exeter &c. and the prisoners, preceded by the headsman, carrying his axe's edge towards them.*

Scene II.

The Queen's *Cabinet.*

Enter Mary *alone.*

MARY.

But that my day hath passed its matin prime,
And timeless sorrow withered all my bloom,
I should not yield my heart to these blank doubts.
How shall a subject dare approach his Queen
With love unbid?—I cannot live alone.

This heart, so long beset with panther passions,
Yearns for the trusty countenance of love.
I cannot live alone. Our woman nature
Doth need support, and loves the hand that
guides it.
O miserable Mother—doomed to creep,
With blasted heart, to a dishonoured grave!
Terrible Father! Must I from each inherit
Your separate Nemesis—predestined woes?
And dare I dream of love? never for me
Shall that sweet bud unfold its perfect flower.
I *have* loved—it is past—O Reginald!
Thou art avenged, my early love, my only!
Yet why, why take the irrevocable vow?
Fruitless repinings hence! In such a mood
I must not meet this youth. Forgotten blush!
Dost thou come back? let me consult thee, mirror.
Plain-spoken Monitor! what dost thou teach?
That eye alone retains its glance of power;
Dark as a caverned well, profound, pelucid;
Quick to flash back all gleams of angry light,
Or softer radiance. But where hast thou fled,
Bloom of young health—life's vernal tide, that like
The sap, developes the sweet wealth of flowers?
Those knitted brows—that forehead scored with
lines—

Those lips compressed and stern—those pallid
cheeks—
Ay—Time, and blighting Care have done their
work!
I'll look no more! what if he loath—reject me!
Or—fearful thought!—accept and hate? or stoop
In meretricious spirit to caress
The hand that gives a sceptre?

[*She covers her eyes with her hands.*

After a pause enter EXETER, *who kneels beside her.*

EXETER.

Queen! sweet mistress!
Your too presumptuous cousin dares approach
This fair hand with a kiss. Hope, like the lark,
Warbles too high for ears on earth to hear it.

MARY.

Too quickly, palled with courtly blandishments,
Doth Royalty to dangerous power admit
False favourites. What, Courtenaye, wouldst
thou be?

EXETER.

Your true Knight: sworn to reverential love!

MARY.

You talk of love! Well know I that true love
Visits not thrones. The lonely sitter there

Finds flatterers, lip-worshippers, but not
True love: true love must be baptized in tears;
Must bow, and weep before the chastener Time;
And grow by self-abasement purified.
Being a Queen, I tremble at this love—
Being a woman, tremble to refuse it.

EXETER.

Accept it, noblest lady! wanting love,
We miss all hope of the chief blessedness
Of life; all nuptial comforts; joys of offspring;
The ornaments of youth, and props of age.
Choose then—but worthily.

MARY.

Oh Edward, Edward!
I know thy wish— [*Pauses.*

EXETER.

Speak on, sweet Saint, speak on!

MARY.

At least what thou would'st have me think thy wish—

EXETER.

Can you suspect?

MARY.

Suspicion comes of sorrow.
Pain, wrong, oppression breed distrustful thoughts.

I cast them from me! Can I have read in vain
The language of thine eyes, thy lips, thy heart?
Long since, and oft, thy prisoned sighs have
reached me—
But then we met not. Were such sighs sincere?

EXETER.

Thy matchless constancy—thy fearless truth,
Won love from all.

MARY.

From all? I wished but one!

EXETER.

Since we have met have not plain words been
spoken?
Have I dissembled?

MARY.

Then were I wronged indeed!

EXETER.

O Mary, doubt no more!

MARY.

Then, take me, Edward!
To trifle were unworthy of a Queen—
Unworthier of a woman. Take me, Edward!
I will be thine. I choose thee from the noblest,
A fitting mate for England. Princely blood,
Tempered by nurture, purified by sorrow,

Should be the Nation's safeguard. Take me,
Edward!

[*She drops her head on his shoulder.*

Let me look on thy face—God bless thee, Youth!
A sad heart thou hast touched with new-born joy;
And lured back self-esteem, so long estranged.
Now part we for a space: yet ere thou goest,
Ask'st thou no boon? I yearn to make thee happy!
Some favour I shall find a grace in giving—
Thou, honour in receiving.

EXETER.

There is a man—
He served me—therefore, loathing him as I do,
I would serve him, though guilty, in return.

MARY.

What guilt would I not pardon at thy suit?

EXETER.

Then grant me Dudley's pardon.

MARY.

Dudley's pardon?
Well, be it so! His doom shall be remitted.
No more of him? This hand is yours—now lead me
To my sister's chamber. She must share our joy.

[*Exeunt together.*

Scene III.

An Apartment in the Tower.

Enter Mary *and* Exeter.

MARY.

Not here? then we must seek her in the pleasance.
Go thou—our Chancellor claims audience first.
Go seek my sister—tell her what thou wilt.
I follow, and shall ratify the tale.

EXETER.

Delay not, gentle mistress. Slowly creeps
The sand of Time when watched by love-sick eyes!

MARY.

Send Gardiner—so adieu—adieu! [*Exit Exeter.*
How noble
His aspect! and how full of grace his port!
I shall be happy yet!—Not here we'll dwell,
Within these doleful turrets. Windsor's shade
Suits happy lovers. There we'll stray together
Unseen, but by the wild deer's timid eye—
I shall be happy yet! This fluttering heart
Shall ache no more with fearful expectation.
No cares but wife-like cares shall cloud my brow—

As thus—why lingers his wind-footed steed
So long upon the chase? How in the tourney
Fares his unshivered lance; his spotless plume?
Wherefore his appetite is dull—cheek pale—
His spirit chafed? Or, peradventure, all
That throng of sweet solicitudes that stir
Maternal bosoms for their infant charge.
Why woeful tears from ready laughter start—
And what caress can soothe such fragile hearts.
Sweet cares! delicious dreams!—But I awake!

Enter GARDINER.

Gardiner, I greet you well! My heart is light!
Why look you grave—you bring no heavy news?

GARDINER.

The christian mourns when but a sinner dies.
I bear the warrant for a sinner's death:
Dudley's. Wil't please you sign?

MARY.

I have changed my purpose.
Prepare a pardon: traitor though he be.

GARDINER.

Pardon, my liege? Have you considered this?

MARY.

My Lord of Exeter hath shown good cause—
You smile—

GARDINER.

I had forboded this. My Lord
Is light of thought, and, so he gains his end,
Weighs not the issue.

MARY.

Edward Courtenaye, Sir,
Deserves not censure.

GARDINER.

Dudley visited
Lord Exeter in prison.

MARY.

We know well
He served him: therefore Courtenaye serves him now.

GARDINER.

After the trial they had private converse:
And a quick ear caught words—touching the Princess—

MARY.

My sister?

GARDINER.

Yes—his love for her—so said,
Or seemed to say, this Dudley.

MARY.

Seemed to say?
There's some mistake—I tell thee, it is false!

Give me a chair—

GARDINER.

You are very pale, my liege—

MARY.

Sir, I am well. It is a lie, I say!
As you shall learn. Report our grace to Dudley:
Then join us in the gardens. There you'll find
Our sister, and much cherished Exeter;
Whom thou, Lord Chancellor, must learn to honour,
Not to malign.

GARDINER.

Pardon my heedlessness.
It was a fault. I shall be circumspect.

MARY.

Be so and prosper. Join us presently.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene IV.

The Tower Gardens.

Enter Elizabeth *from an Arbour, hurriedly: followed by* Exeter. *He kneels.*

ELIZABETH.

Miscreant! how have you dared to speak such language
To a daughter of England?

EXETER.

Mercifully judge me.

ELIZABETH.

This is no case for mercy, but avengement.
Dare you to trifle thus with royal hearts?
You proffered love forsooth! ventured caresses!
But, Sir, I checked you, as was your desert—
And spurn and trample on you as a scorpion.
Begone, I say, once more!

Enter from behind Mary *with* Gardiner *unobserved.*

EXETER.

Will you not pardon
A victim, not offender?

ELIZABETH.

Not offender?
What, wed a Queen—and privily woo her sister?
Out on thee! hence! I spit upon thee, caitiff!

EXETER.

I had no choice—strangely she wrought on me.
You know her—in her passions terrible—
Dared I repulse her? Madness held us both.
I loving thee—thee only, pledged my troth—
Yea, pledged my troth, and must be—

ELIZABETH.

King of England!

EXETER.

Have you no heart for pardon?

ELIZABETH.

None for thee!
Elizabeth of England never pardons.
A heart like hers, above the common shafts
Of hope or fear, indifferently regards
Unworthy suitors: treats them as light toys,
To be cast aside, contemptuously forgotten.

EXETER.

Have you a heart?

ELIZABETH.

No heart, Sir, to betray me:

No heart forgetful of my dignity:
No heart the slave of sensuous weaknesses:
No heart that blinds to duty!

EXETER.

Precious time
Is passing—promise me one boon, at least—
If not forgiveness, silence. She whom I loathe—
Whom I must wed—will soon be here—

MARY [*staggering forward*].

Is here!—
O God! O God!

ELIZABETH.

What have you heard? whate'er
I said, I am prepared to reavow.
No plotter I—no spier out of plots!

MARY.

O God! O God!

ELIZABETH.

I spake in haste—forgive me!
My poor, poor sister! only be calm and hear me.
Nay, pluck not at your throat—stare not so wildly!
Will no one fetch some water? she will choke.

MARY.

What's this? where am I? the earth reels—the
wind

Howls through my ears—your hand, Sir, or I fall!
Elizabeth! you weep—something has happened—
What? what? Has any one assailed my life?
My brain is wounded.

GARDINER [*aside*].

We must change her thoughts—
Or she will straight go mad. I bring, my liege,
False Dudley's pardon.

MARY.

Ha!—a pardon—Dudley—
Yes, I remember. Give it—quickly, quickly—
Give it—Thus, thus, like my poor heart, I rend thee!
I crush thee! Thou shalt die—O pandering Fiend!
There was another paper—give it to me—
Warrant of doom!—a pen—there—let him die—
[*Signs the warrant.*
Stabber of hearts!—ere sunset. Hear ye? vengeance!
A vulture gnaws my heart—food, food, for vengeance!
Soft: there was yet another—where is he?
And she, my loving sister—Boleyn's child!—
Seize on the false ones!

GARDINER.

She is innocent.

ELIZABETH.

My Lord, I pray you, peace.

MARY.

Who dares oppose me?
Obey me, Sir—or—or—obstruct me not—
Or I will do such deeds as shall make pale
The Angel of the Record! Ha! still here—
Thou wretched, wretched man? yet, let me look
One moment on the face I loved.

[*She catches Exeter's arm, gazes wistfully in his face, then suddenly kisses his forehead.*

The last—
Passion's last weakness! I am weak no more!
Henceforth I root all softness from my heart.
Away with him—with her!

[*Exeunt Elizabeth and Exeter, severally, in custody.*

Enter PAGE, *bearing a cup.*

What's this? some wine?
Ay—let me taste—I need it—I am faint.

[*She lifts the cup.*

I take this as a sacramental pledge!
Henceforth am I a dedicated creature
To my country; to my God! I rend all weakness

Forth from my bleeding heart. Nor kin, nor love
Shall warp me. If I live, I'll rule this land
For pious ends severe, not happiness—
For duty—for my People, for the Church!
[*She drinks, making the sign of the Cross.*
The Church for England! England for the
Church! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Prison Chamber, Tower.

NORTHUMBERLAND *at a table:* JANE *and* LORD GUILFORD DUDLEY *seated near.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

MY soul is cheerful! fill the goblet high!
And I will pledge thy fortunes, daughter Jane!
In faith I'm joyous. Speak, my dainty Jane!
Your husband is beside you, and I live.
Ay, and shall live—arch planner—to rebuild
Our tottering fortunes. Fair philosopher!
Let me hear once again thy low, grave voice
Disposedly conversing. Laugh, my Son!
Waken these walls with jubilant acclaims!
Still silent? does my mirth confound you? Jane,
I tell thee thou shalt queen it yet. Thy babe
Shall wear a crown.

JANE.

No crown but martyrdom's
Will fit our brows. Indeed you are to blame, Sir.
This morning—nay, but one short hour agone—
You waited certain death. Believe me, Sir.
We all stand on the very brink of doom.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

So saith the preacher to the healthiest man:
And yet the man lives on. Tush! you are blind.
Do I not know my tool? this Exeter?
And what enamoured Queens will yield to lovers?
My head, be sure, was safe an hour ago:
And now this scrawl secures me beyond fate.

JANE.

Direct him, God! to profitable thoughts
For this great mercy!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Rather let me learn
To improve good fortune. When the crown is thine—

JANE.

The crown for me—for mine?—never, Sir, never!
Too heavy lies one sin upon my soul!
I seek not—never sought—will wear no crown!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Not seek it? Well—'Twill come unsought, I ween.

GUILFORD.

This morning, Father, you had messengers
From Wyatt. Said they well?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

All doubts removed:
All scruples satisfied—he's ours, our's only!

GUILFORD.

But how escape these walls—how join his power?

JANE.

O talk not of escape. We are spared: be thankful!
Abjure—what I ne'er felt—this false ambition:
Unprofitable—that I will not urge—
But most unholy: do not heed your father.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

But he shall heed me; and thou too, despite
Thy yea and nay.

JANE.

Have you no gratitude?
The Queen, no matter why, remits your doom.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And am I not beholden to her Grace?
Good Mary Tudor—beauteous Mary Tudor—
Wise Mary Tudor! I shall not forget.
The time is coming—Ha! my confessor!

Enter FAKENHAM.

And trusty counsellor! why look you grave?

I'm in a merry mood. Bring you the warrant
Her Grace vouchsafed?

FAKENHAM.

I bring a warrant, Sir.

JANE.

See, see—his face is sad—his eyes are downcast.
His words equivocal—not thus, not thus,
Good tidings travel.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What, man, know you not
The Queen's late change? you have been kinder
to me
Than I had looked for, or deserved. Your step
Is heavy, and your countenance distraught.
I pray you, speak.

FAKENHAM.

Alas! unwillingly
I witnessed the Queen's change: her last—her
saddest.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Her last—what dost thou mean? Is the Queen
dead?
Saddest—why then should Exeter be joyous?
Look not so grave, fair Jane! fear nothing, Jane!
Why speak you not? your mystery disturbs
These fearful captives. What saith Exeter?

How thrives he with the Queen?

FAKENHAM.

Let thoughts more serious
Subdue your spirit, Sir. When last we spake
Of sin and sorrow, and repentant hope,
It seemed your heart was touched, hard reason shamed.
Such my hope then—such now your only hope.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Dark Sayer! does this answer meet my question?
What of the Queen? of Exeter?

FAKENHAM.

The Queen—
Body and soul are stricken to the earth.
The Princess and that minion Exeter
Shut up in prison—wherefore you will guess.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I'm lost, I'm lost! trapped in my own wild snare.

FAKENHAM.

Madam, may it please you to retire: the time
Is short.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What time—my time? Give me that paper.
What's this? Death! Death! sudden, unnatural death!
I'm blind! by heaven and hell I cannot die.

I am not fit to die—I dare not die!
O hypocrite! this work is thine—thou hat'st me—
As I have hated thee—I'll not deny it—
Thou hast done this!

FAKENHAM.

You wrong me. I would fain
Have saved thy life. Have I not saved thy soul?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

O pardon my distracted bearing, Sir!
You reasoned eloquently—whispered mercy—

FAKENHAM.

God is a God of mercy.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Torturer!
Dost thou equivocate with pangs like mine?
Thou palterest still: yet canst thou save me, Priest.
Think of my soul! I cannot, unabsolved,
Pass to the presence of my Judge. Hark! hark!
[*A sound of hammering is heard.*
What noise is that? you hear it?

FAKENHAM.

This, indeed,
Would try the stoutest heart.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The scaffold-workers!—

I'm cold—Oh very cold! Give me some wine—
Go, Jane! I shame that you should see me thus.

FAKENHAM.

Christian! be calm! yet all would stagger thus,
If anchored not by certain hope in heaven.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Fakenham! your tongue is gifted to persuade—
Save me!—I will be—whatsoe'er you wish.

FAKENHAM.

Can you speak thus upon the scaffold?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Ay—
Much more!—You muse—Is there yet hope?
even then?
O say! I'll speak—I'll do—I know not what!
Anything—all you wish—spare but my life!
This is too sudden. I'm not fit to die!—
O for a death blow in the front of battle!
The shout of victory, or kinsmen's wail,
Above my dying head! It is not pangs,
Nor death itself, but this reverse that shakes me.
Despise me not, sweet Jane! can you not speak
One word of comfort to a dying father?

FAKENHAM.

Horror hath almost choked her. Take her hence:

This is no scene for women.

[*Guilford leads Jane away.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Is there hope,
Even on the scaffold, if I make profession
Of the true Faith?

FAKENHAM.

I know not. But make clean
Your heart by penitence. Prepare for death:
So shall your future life, if life be spared,
Prove worthier than the past. I seek the Queen.
Put trust in God alone; and He will spare.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

The Tower Hill. A Scaffold at the end of the stage. A side porch through which enter NORTHUMBERLAND, *guarded, preceded by* BEDINGFIELD, *as Lieutenant of the Tower;* PEMBROKE; *and others.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

SOMETHING, ere yet I die, touching my faith
I would make known. It is a privilege
Precious to all, but specially to me—
Am I permitted?

BEDINGFIELD.

Without doubt.

PEMBROKE.

Your Lordship
Will bear in mind, Sir Henry is enjoined
To have this matter perfected ere sunset.
The horizon's clouded: not to miss true time,
He should be prompt.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why then abridge my time
By this unseemly let? this gentleman
Stands in commission: you but a spectator;
Cruel, unmanly, and unnatural!

PEMBROKE.

False to the last!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Protect me from this dastard,
Who strikes me chained! I was a pardoned man
An hour agone. This sudden change might scare
The stoutest heart, the most obdurate soften.
Let me not mount, with angry passions chafed,
Yon fatal stage: but with an humble spirit
Forgiving, seek forgiveness from my God.

PEMBROKE.

Think you all honest men are silenced here,
While knaves speak free?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Aspick! avaunt!

BEDINGFIELD.

Be silent,
My Lord of Pembroke: this is harsh. Sir John,
Speak as you purposed.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I must crave short pause
Till the dean of Paul's return. I would pour forth
My last prayers at his knees, my spiritual sponsor.
Rightly you hear. This holy man hath shown
My soul's dark errors: which I purpose here,
By free confession somewhat to atone.

PEMBROKE [*Aside*].

By Heaven he will recant, and win his pardon
With neck upon the block!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Hear me, good people!
I do acknowledge my most grievous sin.
Out of all bounds ambitious, I deserve
This doom. Be warned by me. Hold fast that
Faith
Which your forefathers loved; consenting not
To heresy, foul source of shame and sin!
There grew my bane. I temporized with evil—
Basely partook with those false fanaticks

Who daily trumpet forth spurious reform—
And, spite of the keen pricking of my conscience,
Presumptuously strove—'tis gone—'tis gone—

PEMBROKE.

Ha, ha!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

That laugh was imped in hell! Strike, Fiend!
Here at the breast that loathes, the mouth that
bans thee!
Cowardly stabber, strike! give me some pang
Shall counterwork this torture of the mind!
Look at him! see that man I made a man
Shrink from Scorn's phantom finger like a hound--
What! not a look? then, thus, thou smitten hound!

[*Touching Pembroke with his finger who starts back and retires.*

Merciful Heaven! is this a mood to die in?
O child! O babbling maniac! fool, fool, fool!—

BEDINGFIELD.

Keep out my Lord of Pembroke.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I am thankful.
Good people, pray for me!

Enter FAKENHAM.

Fakenham, am I saved?

FAKENHAM.

God grant salvation to thy sinful soul!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The terrible "To be" is come! Time's past!
Yet all's to do—an age crammed to a span!
Time, never garnered till thy last sands ebb,—
How shall my sharp need eke thy wasted glass,
Or wit reverse it? my brain spins—my tongue
Is palsied. I must have time—I must have time!
Hurl me not like a dog into the pit!

FAKENHAM.

Turn thee to God! forget this world!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

O Thou
Great Being! who hast made me what I am,
Crush not for ever this sin-leavened clay!
Forget not mercy. Thou, not Judge alone,
But just Redeemer! save me in my sin!—
My voice is choked—Time racks me—World,
farewell!

[*Northumberland drops on his knees before Fakenham, bowing his head upon his hands; then starts up, and hurriedly ascends the scaffold.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The block! the vault! thus are thy words fulfilled!

BEDINGFIELD.

Follow, my Lords; bear witness to the end.
And you, Sir, recollect, as the head falls,
Give fire to your great ordnance: that the Queen
May know, thereby, the traitor is no more.

[*The scene closes: and, after a pause, a Cannon shot is heard.*

Scene III.

The Council Chamber, Tower.

Enter Fakenham *in much agitation, followed immediately by* Gardiner.

FAKENHAM.

'Tis past! Thank God! the habitude to face
All ordinary pangs steeled me not here.
Terrible Conscience with unswerving eye
Glared on him: and the bright edge of the axe
Was as a fascination. Never before
Had I beheld a soldier famed for prowess—
A statesman ever feared for daring counsel—
So abject in reverse. He could not speak:
Scarce seemed to hear; and when upon the block
He laid his neck, his arms fell stiff and frozen:

And there he lay—lips blanched, eyes shut,
cheeks ghastly;
Insensible as when, a moment after,
The severed head was held aloft blood-streaming.
Pray God to spare me such another sight!

GARDINER.

I marvel not, friend Fakenham, thou wert shaken.
But awful times are coming; when our eyes
Shall be familiarized with woe. Time comes
When the Church shall awake, and strike; inflicting
Pangs that shall purify the sinful flesh,
And save from everlasting flames the soul.
Look you—the very sorrows of the Queen
Make her the fitting instrument. Mourn not
Because the cleansing tempest in its path
Meets and strikes down some tree of goodly fruitage.

FAKENHAM.

Alas! for poor Jane Grey!

GARDINER.

I grieve for her.
But in her sure fate see preventive mercy:
The infected air hath need of hurricanes.
Jane living, last hope of these hereticks—
Sure pillar of their cause—graced as she is

With bodily perfections sweet as spring,
And mental ripeness plentiful as harvest,
Throws into shade our sad, though saint-like
Queen.
Both cannot live. One sun lights many spheres:
But two suns for one sphere, nature prohibits.

FAKENHAM.

My Lord, I see too well it must be so.
Jane Grey must die!

GARDINER.

And quickly. Linked events
Envelope, drag her down. Sibylline lips
Have opened; and a warning hath gone forth!
Her creed—or ours—must perish! Have we
wisdom,
And speed we not the march of prophecy?
But hush! she comes—sad Mary Tudor comes—
Cold, but composed, marmoreally rigid!
I have thought in vain, unprofitably read,
If such a mien as that portend not fate.

Enter QUEEN MARY *attended.*

MARY.

My Lord, we waited.

GARDINER.

Zeal for your Grace's service

Be our excuse.

MARY [*to Fakenham*].

You saw the traitor's end.
Died he a Catholick?

FAKENHAM.

His last professions
Bespoke true Faith. God, only, knows the heart.
I hope he died in Faith.

MARY.

Such is my prayer.
The strong hand then of treason is cut off.
You hear, my Lords, that Wyatt, yesternight,
Hath countermarched, and crossed the Thames at Hampton?
He, and that lozel Brett, confederate, fill
Our streets with outrage. Scouts from these have held
Close conferences with Lord Guilford Dudley;
Whom, lying under sentence, we had spared.
Shall we still spare?

GARDINER.

So were your Grace imperilled:
With you the Church; with both the Common-weal.

MARY.

Then let his sentence be fulfilled to-morrow.

GARDINER.

His wife?

MARY.

I will consider.

GARDINER.

She is proclaimed
From street to street: the very walls are ciphered
With traitorous scrolls, that hail her "Jane the Queen."
Shall such wrong go unchecked?

MARY.

That is their folly;
Not hers. The culpable shall smart for this.

Enter BEDINGFIELD *hastily.*

Pardon my liege! it is no fault of mine—
As shall be proved—the duke of Suffolk's fled;
And joined with Wyatt.

MARY.

Suffolk fled? Jane's father?
Henceforth let justice rule. Farewell, weak Pity!
We cannot, Jane, both live: why then, die thou!

[*She takes a parchment from a cabinet and signs.*

'Tis done! the royal rebel must abide
Her doom to-morrow. First, let the husband die.

FAKENHAM.

Hear me!

MARY.

Beware, Sir!

FAKENHAM.

I but supplicate
Permission to approach this hapless lady.
A holier spirit may perchance awake;
Worthy the sweet prerogative of mercy.

MARY.

If Jane abjures her heresy, I spare her.
So will she be no longer to the Church
A foul reproach, a canker in the State.
No more. Break up the council. Gardiner!
Be it again so ordered, at the moment
Lord Guilford dies a cannon be discharged.
Then lead to execution Lady Jane.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene IV.

A Prison in the Tower.

Lady Jane, *alone, sewing a shroud. She turns an hour glass.*

JANE.

I never more shall turn that glass. For me
Time is fulfilled: and ere those sands run down,
My trembling fingers must complete their task--
Their final task—or not in work of mine
Shall his dear limbs, composed in death, be wrapped.
With what a speed they haste! by mine own heart
I count the flying seconds of his life.
Oh what a task for wedded hands!—'Tis done!
And now I fold and lay thee to my bosom,
Which his espoused head so loved to press.

Enter the Duchess of Suffolk.

What noise is that? not time—it is not time?
Oh my dear Mother. [*Falls on her neck.*

DUCHESS.

Wretched—wretched Mother!

JANE.

It is not much to die. Whoever faints
Has tasted death, waking in pain to sorrow.
Have comfort—Desolate I leave you not:
My father near and other duteous daughters.

DUCHESS.

Thy father hath gone forth and raised his banner
To dare the Queen. This act hath sealed thy doom.
The father slays his child!

JANE.

God's will be done!
How dark soe'er his ways or blind our eyes!
My precious mother! weep not—leave me some strength!

DUCHESS.

Would I were dead!

JANE.

Live for my sister's sake.
She needs thy counsel, and my sad example:
For there is that in Herbert's father's heart,
May move him to attempt the crown for her.

DUCHESS.

O let her rather labour in the fields,
And spin for bread beside a cottage hearth,
Than step unto a throne! Thou fatal Blood!

Predestinated race! all who partake
Thy veins must pour them forth on battle fields,
Or the foul scaffold! Doomed Plantagenet!
The Tudor follows in your steps.

JANE.

Our sands
Have almost run. I must be quick. Will he
See me once more? one last, last kiss bestow?

DUCHESS.

The malice of the Queen forbids.

JANE.

Say mercy—
Else were our hearts left beggared of all firmness.
'Tis best thus. We shall meet—yes, ere yon sun,
Now high in heaven, shall from the zenith stoop,
Together they will lay us in one coffin,
Together our poor heads. Weep not, my mother!
But hear me. Promise you will see this done.

DUCHESS.

I promise.

JANE.

So our bones shall intermingle;
And rise together, when the angelick trump
Shall lift us to the footstool of our Judge!
What shall I give thee?—they have left me little—
What slight memorial through soft tears to
gaze on?

This bridal ring—the symbol of past joy?
I cannot part with it: upon this finger
It must go down into the grave. Perchance
After long years some curious hand may find it,
Bright like our better hopes, amid the dust,
And, piously, with a low sigh, replace it.
Here—take this veil, and wear it for my sake.
And take this winding sheet to him; and this
Small handkerchief so wetted with my tears,
To wipe the death-damp from his brow. This kiss—
And this—my last—print on his lips, and bid him
Think of me to the last and wait my spirit.
Farewell, my Mother! farewell, dear, dear, Mother!
These terrible moments I must pass in prayer—
For the dying—for the dead! farewell! farewell!

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene V.

The Queen's *Cabinet in the Tower.*

Queen Mary *alone.*

MARY.

I have no thirst for blood; nor yet would shrink
From shortening earthly life: for what is life

That we should court its stay? a pearl of price
In festal days—but mockery to mourners.
What's life to thee—thy loved one dead—poor
Jane?
What's life to me, by him I loved betrayed?
I take from thee what is no loss to thee;
And much infects the realm. Gladly would I
My life on such conditions sacrifice.
The time for thy short widowhood is come:
But ye shall reunite above. For me
The heart's blank widowhood must be for ever.
Jane! on thy block the throned Queen envies thee!
—I am not well: my brain is hot: around me
Are flitting shapes unearthly. Sleep forgets me:
And waking visions mock me, worse than dreams.
—Who knocks?

Enter GARDINER *and* FAKENHAM.

What would you, Sirs? we would be private.
Speak, quickly, quickly—I am chafed and stung
With troublous thought!

GARDINER [*aside*].

'Tis as I feared. Her eye
Is restless; and the red spot on her cheek
Looks angry. [*Aloud*] Captain Brett is ta'en, my
liege,

And Wyatt.

MARY.

Whom impeach they? are they questioned?
Do they confess?

GARDINER.

Not yet: they had not time.

MARY.

See they confess: else, stretch them on the rack!
This heart is racked—my guiltless heart—why not
The limbs that trample down all covenants
Of God and man? Ay—torture, till confession!
I who see visions—hark you!—know what you
Who wake are blind to. Treason lurks beneath
The blandest smile; the most obsequious bow.
Trust none! the comeliest and fair-spoken least.
Doubt most who most profess! O have a care
Of youths and maids that in their girdles hide
Dagger and poison!—what a man was Dudley!
To tremble at the axe! why, I should laugh—
I—a weak woman! but there's cause for that—
Hush! you shall hear anon. Then Exeter?
But, we'll not talk of him—poor fool!—I want
To see Jane Grey—after her widowhood.

FAKENHAM [*aside*].

After?—she then shall live.

GARDINER [*aside*].

Observe, she raves.

MARY.

We'll sit together in some forest nook,
Or sunless cavern by the moaning sea,
And talk of sorrow and vicissitudes
Of hapless love ; and luckless constancy ;
And hearts that death or treachery divides!
What's the hour? be quick—be quick—I've
much to do.

GARDINER.

Just noon.

MARY.

There will be death soon on the air,
With outspread pinions making an eclipse.
Ha! ha! brave work we Queens do! destiny
Is in our hands: yea, in these very veins
The spirit of the fatal Sisterhood
Riots! the snakes of the Eumenides
Brandish their horrent tresses round my head!

FAKENHAM [*aside*].

This must be met. It hath been said that music,
Some simple strain breathed forth by human
voices,
Can counterwork the venom of sick minds.
If the choked fountain of her tears he cleansed,
All shall end well.

GARDINER.

Throw wide the gallery doors,
That open on the chapel. It is the hour
For service—hark, the prelude hath begun.
And now the Choir.

[*Fakenham throws open the folding doors of a Gallery, through which issue solemn strains of Musick. As the Musick proceeds the Queen's stupor relaxes, and her sensibility gradually revives. The Musick ceases.*

MARY.

Airs fresh from heaven breathe round me!
Sing on, bright angels! tears relieve my heart—
My brain is calmed. Sing on and let me weep!
[*A pause.*
Would they were saved! Alas poor widowed one!
Can it not still be done? no, no—too late!
[*A death bell begins to toll.*
It is the hour: there is no time for thought—
She will be widowed while I speak—
[*She speaks hurriedly and with much agitation.*
See—see—
The dark procession issues from the gate—
And now they tread the courts—now Guilford mounts
The scaffold—now the headsman kneels for pardon—

Now bares the comely throat—and now clasped
hands
Rise from the block—while holy lips pronounce
Slow absolution—now he stoops his head—
And now—and now—

[*After a short pause the signal gun is heard.*

He is no more!—Great God!
Have mercy upon both!

GARDINER.

Her thoughts are changed:
Her brain relieved.

FAKENHAM.

Now plead for Jane.

GARDINER.

Too late!
Hear yonder bell.

MARY.

What's that? again the death bell!
Hark you! I would have speech with Jane. Fly,
Fakenham!
My foot is weak and slow—Gardiner, attend me.
Fly, Fakenham, fly!

FAKENHAM.

Too late! too late! too late!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

The inner Court of the Tower. A Scaffold at the rear of the scene.

Enter JANE GREY *leaning on the* DUCHESS OF SUFFOLK, *followed by* BEDINGFIELD, *&c.*

JANE.

My Mother! we part here.

DUCHESS.

Tear her not from me!
Was it for this, O martyred saint, I bore thee?
Is my long travail's fruit thy bloody death?

JANE.

Here must we part. She faints—so best for both!
Gently remove her. Bless thee! bless thee,
Mother!
And give thee length of years, to me denied—
Now lead me forward: I am ready.

BEDINGFIELD.

Madam,
We fain would linger on the way. Our eyes,
Blind though they be with tears, strain round to
catch
Some signal of reprieve.

JANE.

O seek it not!
It cannot be. My life may not consist
With the realm's safety. Innocent am I
In purpose; but the object of great crimes.
Good blood must still flow on till Jane's be shed.

BEDINGFIELD.

At least we may delay till the Dean comes
To whisper spiritual comfort?

JANE.

Infinite
Is the Almighty's goodness. In that, only,
Place I my trust. My time, Sir, is too short
For controversy: and that good man's duty
Compels him to debate my creed. I thank him—
Pray you, Sir, say I thank him, from my heart—
For all his charities. In privacy
My prayers—not unacceptable, I trust,
To God my Saviour—have been offered up.
So must they to the end.

BEDINGFIELD.

At least permit me
To seek the Queen—

JANE.

Sir Henry, by no means.
Her Grace is cumbered with affairs of state;
And must no more be troubled for my sake.

Think you I wish to live? Look on these weeds;
This widow-garment! Life, to one like me,
Is a drained vessel. As for death, being wholly
Intent on the life to come, I disregard it.

[*A bier covered by a pall, is brought down from the scaffold: and carried across the stage.*

Ah! my poor heart!—stop, Sir! one moment stop!

[*She approaches the bier, lifts a hand from beneath the pall, wipes it with her handkerchief, kisses it; then rising, places the handkerchief in her bosom.*

Lie there, dear blood! over my heart, 'till death!
Sir, pardon me this weakness. I am ready.
Yet, hold! some words are due, before I die
To the Queen's Grace, to Justice, and to England.
My sentence hath been just; not for aspiring
Unto the crown, but that, with guilty weakness,
When proffered I refused it not. From me
Let future times be warned that good intent
Excuseth not misdeeds: all instruments
Of evil must partake its punishment.
Sir Henry, take my hand. Lead on—to heaven!

[*As she turns toward the scaffold, she starts, smiles, gradually looks upwards, raising her arms.*

I come, dear Love!—Jesus, receive our souls!

[*As they ascend the scaffold the scene closes.*

Scene VII.

Jane Grey's Prison in the Tower. An open window at the rear.

Enter hurriedly, Mary, *followed by* Gardiner.

MARY.

She's gone—I come too late—Forgive me, God!
Myself I never—never—shall forgive.
Ha! from yon casement they may mark a signal!
[*She leans from the window.*
Hold! hold! [*She draws back with a shriek.*
Great God! it is—it is—her head
That demon lifts and brandishes before me!
[*She rushes from the window rubbing her eyes wildly.*
Pah! I am choked—my mouth is choked with blood—
My eyes—my nostrils—swim in blood—my hair
Stiffens with blood—the floor is slippery
With blood—all—blood! Mother and unborn babe—
Both slain!—Mother and child!—The cry of blood

Rises to heaven—the curse of Cain is launched
Upon me! Innocent victims! at God's throne
Already ye bear witness. Mercy—mercy!
Spare one who knew not how to spare!

[*She kneels.*

Enter FAKENHAM.

Ay,—kneel
To heaven—and pray! lift up your hands to God!
Lift up your voice—your heart! Pray, Sinner,
pray! [*The curtain falls.*

END OF PART FIRST.

MARY TUDOR.

A TRAGEDY.

PART THE SECOND.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PHILIP, *King of Naples and England: Prince of Spain.*
EGMONT; FIGUEROA; *and* COUNT DE FERIA; *special Envoys.*
JACQUES RENAUD; *resident Ambassador.*
MEDINA, PESCARA, *&c. attendant Nobles.*
} *Spaniards.*

CRANMER, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*
THE CARDINAL REGINALD DE LA POLE.
GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester, Chancellor.*
EDWARD, EARL OF OXFORD, *Great Chamberlain.*
MARQUESS OF WINCHESTER; EARL OF PEMBROKE.
EARLS OF BEDFORD; DERBY; LORDS HOWARD OF EFFINGHAM; PAGET.
WENTWORTH, *Constable of Calais;* WILLIAMS.
BONNER, *Bishop of London, and other Prelates.*
FAKENHAM, *Abbot of Westminster, Queen's confessor.*
RIDLEY *and* LATIMER, *deprived Bishops of London and Worcester.*
DR. SANDYS, *a Protestant enthusiast.*
DR. WESTON, *a Roman Catholic enthusiast.*
EDWARD UNDERHILL, *called the "hot-gospeller."*
SIR JOHN GAGE.
LORD COBHAM, *an insurrectionary leader.*
BRIDGES, *Sub-Lieutenant of the Tower.*

QUEEN MARY TUDOR.
PRINCESS ELIZABETH.
LADY MARGARET DOUGLAS.
Ladies of the Chamber, &c.

Scene: principally in London.

MARY TUDOR.

PART THE SECOND.

INTRODUCTORY SCENE.

Entrance to the Chapel in the Tower of London: the interior screened off by a black curtain.

Enter FAKENHAM.

FAKENHAM.

WHEN will these vigils end; these penances
Severer than the Church prescribes? Pray God
Her mind give way not: sorely it is shaken.
These tearful macerations of the spirit,
These fasts that chain all natural appetites,
Nor mortify the sinful flesh alone,
Must be restrained; or death will close the scene.
The very elements partake her throes.
A fearful night! Fitfully lights and shadows
Pass o'er the Earth, as struggling passions deepen
Or blaze across the brow of Madness—now

Yon moon shines nobly through the surging
clouds—
Anon, like some poor wreck among the breakers,
Whelmed in the abyss, she shall be seen no more!

Enter ELIZABETH *with* GARDINER.

GARDINER [*to Fakenham*].

Still lies she there—
Prostrate upon the grave-stone of Jane Grey?

ELIZABETH.

At your behest Lord Abbot, I am come.
What would the Queen with me?

FAKENHAM.

Whate'er hath passed
Be sure her Grace hath ever truly loved you.
Therefore we trust your coming may dispel
The baleful visions that enthrall her spirit;
Dispersed, as fiends before rebuking Saints.

ELIZABETH.

You hope too much: awakened jealousy
Preys on her, like the Egyptian's asp.

FAKENHAM.

Fear not:
You are the last hope of King Henry's line.

ELIZABETH.

Whate'er my fate, I stand prepared to meet it.

[*Gardiner withdraws the curtain: Queen Mary seen prostrate on the ground.*

FAKENHAM.

Advance—but with abated breath, soft footfall,
As trembling mother to her sick child's bed—

[*They stand watching her. The storm increases. The Queen sits up; gazing wildly round.*

QUEEN.

Does the last hour approach?—dread consummation
Of wrath divine and human agony!
Artillery of heaven, thus shalt thou roar,
Commingling with angelic trumpet-blasts,
Precursors of the Judge! who then shall stand
Upright and unabashed? unto that throne
The great, the lowly—victim and oppressor,
Shall troop; that throne girt with avenging Spirits!
And there, link'd heart to heart, the slaughtered Jane,
And Mary, with her bloody memory,
Shall kneel, awaiting doom!—I wake—from dreams— [*Seeing Elizabeth.*
Say who art thou, veiled mourner, that com'st hither
To water these cold stones with pious tears?
Give me your hand: my knees are weak.—I part

The tresses on thy brow; and gaze upon thee
With the strong yearning of a blighted love.
I know thee, sister!—Take me to thine arms—
And let me weep.

ELIZABETH.

These mingling tears wash out
All venom from past sorrow—

QUEEN.

Not from mine!—
Immedicable evil hath infected
The fount of life within me. I shall die
In premature decay; and fall aside
As withered fruit falls from a blasted branch.
I, like a mother by her dying babe,
Have closed the eyes of Hope; and o'er my heart
Torpid Despair fans with his vampyre wings.
—Eternal Majesty! Thou seest me here
A Queen hemmed in with dark conspiracies;
A Christian Prince, baited by schismaticks.
I call on thee for prescience to detect,
Strength to control them; unsubdued resolve
To execute thy judgements.—Save thy Church!
Henceforth I cast aside these weeds which sully
The lustre of my state; these vain repinings
That enervate my soul. Unflinchingly
All functions of my crown shall be fulfilled.

Ay, let them rave! I am the Lord's Vicegerent!
Fly, brood of darkness! for my prayer hath
risen—
And God will hear, and smite, as once he smote
The sin of Korah: and the earth shall ope
And swallow Blasphemy: and Plagues leap forth
Consuming impious men: even till the Church,
Swinging her holy censer in the midst,
Shall stay the pestilence; God's wrath appeased!
—Answer me not.—I rise from this cold grave,
My penitential couch, with heart as frozen
As the dead limbs beneath, and will unbending
As this hard stone that shuts her from the world.
Jane! take my last farewell! Now lead me forth
To life: I commune with the Dead no more.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT I.

Scene I.

A room in Whitehall Palace.

Enter Gardiner *and* Fakenham.

GARDINER.

STRANGE are the phases of the female mind,
So quick in phantasy, so slow to reason,
Eager, inconsequential. Such is Mary:
With thought as soaring as the eagle's flight,
Swift as the storm-cloud's shadow; and as
fleeting!
It is our office, Fakenham, gives this insight:
And to our profit—yea, the Church's profit—
Yea, the wide Kingdom's profit—moulds it.

FAKENHAM.

Wisely
This privilege, built up on circumstance,
Must be employed, and to good ends confined;
Or some rough hand will smite it down.

GARDINER.

Good Abbot,
Are we not wakeful? Gentler confessor
And wiser than art thou, hath never bowed
His ear to royal whisper. It is time
To test this privilege.

FAKENHAM.

Thy purpose, Bishop?

GARDINER.

The Queen must wed: the State—the Church demands it.
'Tis true no dangerous competitor
Is left to shake the throne—for none looks now
To the worthless Exeter. Who else remains?

FAKENHAM.

Why pass the noblest by?—the Cardinal—
Reginald Pole?

GARDINER.

A Pope may not be King.

FAKENHAM.

Are you quite sure that he is Pope?

GARDINER.

Why doubt it?
The scrutiny made sure of his election.
And who hath e'er renounced that noblest crown
Of earth? Besides he hath a loyal heart,

And would not pluck her crown from Mary's
brow.

FAKENHAM.

Might he not share it?

GARDINER.

He!—a churchman marry?
You babble.

FAKENHAM.

No, my lord. Pole hath not taken
The irrevocable vow: he is not Priest;
But Cardinal Deacon: and the Holy See
Hath power to absolve.

GARDINER.

True. Cæsar Borgia
Was secularized: he laid aside the purple;
And was a married man, once and again;
Duke of Romagna and Valentinois.
More than the tonsure ladies loved his ringlets.
A pregnant precedent.

FAKENHAM.

If you knew Pole,
As I have known him, you would not sneer thus.

GARDINER.

I meant no sneer. His Eminence, I doubt not,
Pious and shrewd: if worldly, what of that?
The Clergy are but men: if young (and he,

At fifty, for a Prince of the Church, is young)
And lured to greatness by successful love,
Men must slake thirst even at the fountain head.
You were Pole's friend in youth?

FAKENHAM.

I knew him well:
And love him yet.

GARDINER.

Ay, ay. This Pole has friends—
What manner of man was he in Salisbury house,
When playmate of our gracious Queen, his cousin?

FAKENHAM.

I knew him not till after days; a student
In Padua.

GARDINER.

And then?

FAKENHAM.

A nobler presence
Never embodied a more gracious soul:
Ardent, yet thoughtful; in the search of knowledge
Unwearied, yet most temperate in its use.
Whate'er he learned he wore with such an ease,
It seemed incorporated with his substance;
And beamed forth like the light that emanates

From a Saint's brow.

GARDINER.

Well, well—at Padua
You were his choice companion?

FAKENHAM.

No. I marked him
As a far Alp: and loved to watch the sunrise
Dawn on his ample brow. He lived apart,
As well became his doubly glorious lineage;
Grandson of George of Clarence, and last heir
Of Warwick; him who, greater than a King,
Made and unmade our Kings.

GARDINER.

But had he not
A cloudy mood at times?

FAKENHAM.

And that became
His lineage. Then he thought upon his mother,
His grandsire, and those great ancestral woes.

GARDINER.

Speak, as you saw him.

FAKENHAM.

Oft have I watched him sitting
For hours, on some rude promontory's edge,
Wrapt in his mantle, his broad brow sustained
With outspread palm, o'ershadowing his eyes.

And there, as one of Titan birth he lingered
In strange community with nature; mingling
With all around—the boundless sky, the ocean,
The rock, the forest—looking back defiance
Unto the elements: as some lone column
Beneath the shadow of a thunder-cloud.

GARDINER.

Well: as I said before, the throne stands firm;
But fresher blood is needful to transmit it.
Our Queen (Heaven guard her for us) is not strong.
'Twere well we had from her a healthier scion
To feed the kingdom, through forth-coming time,
With fruit of the same stock. The Queen must wed.

FAKENHAM.

Why not with Pole?

GARDINER.

A grave enthusiast
May write a moving book, but scarce rule men.
Yet hear me. He is but an Englishman;
And 'tis an adage older than the hills
That prophets are not honoured in their land.
Trained for the crosier, not the sword, his arm
Is all unequal to the stress of battle.
We must look round elsewhere.

FAKENHAM.

Nor find another
So royally endowed.

GARDINER.

Abstractedly,
Perhaps so. But observe me, England needs
A Prince whose disciplined and numerous spears
Shall fence the throne from miscreant mobs at home
And win respect abroad; a man whose birth
Bespeaks dominion; to whom intellect
Descends as an hereditary fief;
Preeminently Catholic--

FAKENHAM.

You know,
Or had not praised this Wonder so.

GARDINER.

I know him.
And he is Spanish Philip, son of Charles;
That wisest monarch, most devout of Christians,
Potent of captains, fortunate of men.—
(And we should ever sail in Fortune's wake)—

FAKENHAM.

A bigot boy!

GARDINER.

I am astonished! you,

A Priest, a mitred Abbot, to speak thus!
This is the cant of Puritans: avoid it.
It hath the smack of sin. Philip, I grant you,
Is youthful: but his German tutelage
And grave Castilian manners, make him old.

FAKENHAM.

Too young, I still aver, to wed the Queen—
At least to love her.

GARDINER.

Have you got the stamp
Of the said Cardinal, your great ideal,
Upon your metal, that you descant thus
Of love? What part have churchmen, what have statesmen
In leagues of love? What royal marriages?
I say, Prince Philip is a proper man;
Whose progeny will much advance the realm;
Whose piety, inherited, protect
The Church: and this all Christians leal desire.

FAKENHAM.

Does her Grace know your lordship's purposes?

GARDINER.

She hath heard affably my argument.
I pray you not to name the Cardinal,
(Whom doubtless, his grave dignities considered
And sacred calling, she hath long forgotten

As one who might have wooed, perchance have won her)
I mean, good Abbot, name him not, save only
As a high prelate: we will say—the Pope.
Believe me—

FAKENHAM.

You mistake her. She is changed.
Passion and grief have done the work of time,
And sleep in their own ashes. Her strong soul,
Calm as the nether levels of the sea,
The superficial tumults of this world
Trouble no more with clamour. Peace, hard-won,
The peace of faith, the peace of thought, the peace
Of heavenly hope, and earthly hopelessness,
Reign in her spirit. To her country vowed,
She lives for duty only, and affects,
(Wed she or wed she not,) the nation's weal,
Her own not seeking.

GARDINER.

Tumult comes unsought—
Tut, Sir, the nature changes not. Her coldness
Is but exhaustion. Deep is Passion's sleep
While its slow energies regerminate.
I say her mood will change.—Join we the council.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

The Council chamber, Whitehall. The Council assembled: the Spanish Ambassador.

Enter the Queen, *followed by* Gardiner, Winchester, Oxford, Pembroke, Bedford, Derby, *&c.*

QUEEN.

Ever regardful of our subjects' wishes,
And knowing that you hold our female nature
Too weak, unaided, to contend with treason,
We ask your counsel. Many seek our hand.
I am not prone to marriage. I know well
That mine is not the gift of comeliness;
And too much grief hath made my mind unpliant.
Therefore I fear to wed: but more I fear
Good men's mistrust, seeing a lonely woman
Amid so many factious, and no arm
Strong to repress them. What is your advice?
Speak, Chancellor.

GARDINER.

In this we are unanimous:
Praying your smiles upon the Emperor's suit.
We deem Prince Philip an auspicious match:
In whose alliance England shall have pride;

Your Grace abiding comfort; and the People
Tranquillity through an assured succession.

RENAUD.

Upon our knees we humbly pray your Grace
To grant Prince Philip's suit.

QUEEN.

Great God! direct me.
Gardiner, I would consult you. Is it past doubt
Our cousin—Reginald—the Cardinal—
In very truth is Pope? Deceive me not.

GARDINER.

Unquestionably, Madam. Is he a Christian
To spurn the captaincy of Christendom?
'Tis certain he was chosen. Holy Church
Needs him. Can he stand back?

QUEEN [*aloud*].

It must be so?
My lord ambassador, we'll not refuse you.

RENAUD.

God save the Prince and Queen!

PEMBROKE.

Your pardon, Sir—
The Queen and Prince.

GARDINER.

Henceforth those names are mated.
The consort shall partake all royal titles

And powers: while this our Queen shall share
with him
Reciprocal advantage; and their issue
Hold, not alone these kingdoms, but augmented
With the broad Netherlands and Burgundy.

RENAUD.

To this the imperial embassy consents,
Long live the royal pair!

GARDINER.

Amen!

QUEEN.

My Lords!
Being a woman, it beseems me not
To treat of my own marriage: but remember,
This ring, which with my crown I first put on,
Hath made the realm my husband before all.
The faith I then impledged unto my People
Must stand inviolate: look well to that;
And bind me to no inconsistent duties.
You will debate this leisurely. May God
Direct and bless your counsels. [*The lords retire.*
Now, my lord Bishop,
Bring to our presence Ridley and Latimer.
They shall enjoy free speech, and patient hearing,
Ere we consign them to the secular arm.

GARDINER.

Your Grace shall find them obdurate.

QUEEN.

There may be
A way to soften worse asperities.

GARDINER.

Nay you shall find none rougher.

Enter RIDLEY *and* LATIMER. *They kneel.*

QUEEN.

I am glad
That you can kneel.

RIDLEY.

Foully have they belied us,
And basely, madam, who would make you doubt
The loyalty of your true English Church.

QUEEN.

You speak, Sir, stoutly of your Church, as though
There were none greater.

LATIMER.

There is none.

QUEEN.

Methinks
Less arrogance might better suit that garb.

RIDLEY.

God knoweth none have cause to be more humble:
We stand corrected.

QUEEN.

I will task you, then.
You, Ridley, were deputed in my troubles
To tamper with my people.

RIDLEY.

May it please you—
I went with charge to reason with your Grace,
On points of doctrine: further I deny;
And would have scorned.

QUEEN.

Well, Sir, the men that used you—
How dealt they with me?

RIDLEY.

Wrongfully; I answer.

QUEEN.

You have good warrant to say so. Observe me.
Ye took my officers, my stewards, my maidens;
Ye put me to my desk to sum accounts;
Ye taught me how to bake and how to brew:
But there were some found faithful, who had served me,
Could I, without return, have taken service.

RIDLEY.

These were no acts of mine.

QUEEN.

When you had power

You strove to bar the service of my church,
Even in my household: nay, you wrought my brother
To twit me with contumacy—to threaten.
Then made I answer that my soul was God's—
My faith unchangeable—my thoughts mine own.
To this I pledged my head: and ye had ta'en it,
Had not my cousin Charles, the Emperor,
Dictated sufferance on pain of war.

RIDLEY.

The temper of the times in truth pressed hardly.
Somewhat to have yielded had been scarcely sinful.

QUEEN.

Shall I retort that on you? If 'twas then
An argument of worth, why not so now?
What then was my condition now is your's.
But I refrain. I ever have accounted
Death welcomer than life with troubled conscience.
I cannot think one thing and do another.

GARDINER.

The heretick falters.

RIDLEY.

Heretick I am not:
True servant of the living God.

GARDINER.

God's Passion!
Said I not how these fellows should be known?
The living God forsooth! as though there were
A dead one! All your babble is "the Lord!"—
"As the Lord liveth!"

RIDLEY [*to the Queen*].

You would not hear God's word.

QUEEN.

What you now call God's word is not the same
As in my father's time.

RIDLEY.

It never alters:
Hath been, and is the same; but better known,
And practised, in some ages than in others.

QUEEN.

It is not as you make it that I take it;
But as the holy Fathers do interpret.

RIDLEY.

I have been wrong! God pardon me that ever
I rested, or ate food, beneath a roof
Where God's word was rejected. I should, rather,
Have shaken from my feet the dust, departing,
In testimony against you and your house!

QUEEN.

Fear ye not, masters Latimer and Ridley,

The secular arm?

RIDLEY.

No earthly arm fear I.

LATIMER.

I should look up and laugh at every stroke
Endured in the good cause.

QUEEN.

Fear ye not, Sirs,
The Church's condemnation?

RIDLEY.

If the true Church,
Assuredly.

QUEEN.

Sir, you are contumacious.
By your own constitutions am I not
Your lawful head ecclesiastical?
You'll not deny it. Hear me then. Albeit
My faith is fixed, I purpose not to shake
The faith of others, further than God shall show
The truth through worthy preachers: to which end
All rash discourses are forbad; and readings
Of Scripture, without license from ourself.
Answer ye not?—Will ye conform and live?

LATIMER.

In all things lawful we have ever been

Conformable: things evil we resist.

QUEEN.

I ask but abstinence from wrong.

RIDLEY.

Times are
When mere inaction is substantial wrong.

LATIMER.

I testify against your abstinence
Or physical, or moral:—thoughts, deeds, words;
All smack of evil. We must speak or die!

QUEEN.

You speak and die, perchance.

LATIMER.

Dear brother Ridley!
Be of good cheer. Whate'er betide we welcome
In the Lord's name! O Queen! that day is past
When spiritual knowledge was confined to
priests,
Our very babes drink knowledge as they suck.
Each stripling, as he runs, plucks from each
bough
The fruit of knowledge.

QUEEN.

Ah, Sirs, have a care!
The tree of knowledge was an evil thing,
With root in hell, and fruitage unto death.

But in the self-same garden likewise grew
Another mystery, the tree of life.
This too bore fruit, unseen till aftertime:
And this was Christ. Children of Adam, we,
Condemned to cultivate what first we stole,
Must tend the second tree with watchful love,
Or perish by the poison of the first!—
No more. I called you with a good intent:
Ponder what I have said; so shall ye live.
Against God's manifest will vainly ye strive.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene III.

A Street in London.

Enter Underhill *and* Citizens *of two parties.*

FIRST CITIZEN.

What means this hurly burly? Ho! my masters,
Will ye not peace when the good Queen commands it?
The Council too—

SECOND CITIZEN.

Good Queen—good Council? say you?

Why do they send their knaves to preach at us?
Wolves in sheep's clothing!

THIRD CITIZEN.

Sir, you wrong us much,
Branding with epithets like these our clergy.

UNDERHILL.

Peace, ye uncivil brawlers! both are wrong.

FIRST CITIZEN.

And who art thou? meddlers are mischief-makers.

SECOND CITIZEN.

He is Queen Mary's servant—fie on his meddling!
Hot-Gospeller forsooth!

UNDERHILL.

Hark ye, Sir growler,
I have a hot hand—hotter than my tongue,
Can make the foul mouth smart that snarls on me.

THIRD CITIZEN.

Well-spoken, preacher!

UNDERHILL.

Well, Sir, what's your pleasure?

THIRD CITIZEN.

Come to Paul's cross, and hear our reverend doctors.
You're not a man to gag soft argument.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Hear argument forsooth! Hark ye, I'll task you.

Why vent your rancour 'gainst the late good
King?
It is enough to madden men.—

THIRD CITIZEN.

And you—
Why pray ye for our good Queen's death? 'Tis
well
They have made that treason.

UNDERHILL.

Marry, it is well.
She were a generous Queen if rightly guided.
But you must know, Sir, we'll not be restricted
In our souls' freedom. We, Sir, have the word—

THIRD CITIZEN.

You have—but we the sword!

SECOND CITIZEN.

Away with him!
He will infect us—plague upon the leper!

[*They chase the third Citizen away.*

UNDERHILL.

Come, come; you wax disorderly.

SECOND CITIZEN.

Indeed?
When Cobham wins the city worse shall follow.

UNDERHILL.

Peace, prithee.

SECOND CITIZEN.

When stout Bess shall be our Queen,
There shall be plates and pottles—yea, no fasts.
And chimney nooks for preachers shall be cozy.

FIRST CITIZEN.

So, so—when shall this be?

SECOND CITIZEN.

There have been omens—
Two suns rose in the east—rainbows 'neath moons—
A woman—no, a cow—hath yeaned a calf
Twain-headed!

FIRST CITIZEN.

This is stark folly! one fool hears
A voice cry from the walls of an old house,
And the mob swears it is an Angel's tongue,
Inveighing 'gainst this marriage.

SECOND CITIZEN.

When they shouted
"God save Queen Mary!"—mark—no answer then.
But when they shouted, "Save Elizabeth!"
The voice replied "So be it"—Being asked
What is the Mass? it said, "Idolatry!"

UNDERHILL.

Pshaw! Straight the council had the wall pulled down;

And lugged forth a young girl who made confession.
Queen Mary packed her to the pillory.
Her father would have hanged.

FIRST CITIZEN.

Another day
Some giddy boys played Wyatt and the Queen,
And scratched and kicked, till blood flowed ruefully.
Nay, one, to spite the Queen, they nick-named Philip;
And left half-hanged. What said her Grace to this?
"Lock up the urchins for an hour or so,
And whip the most pugnacious."

SECOND CITIZEN.

Still, I say,
Down with the scurvy Spaniards! down with all Papists!

UNDERHILL.

To the rescue—Officers! [*A riot ensues.*

Shouts heard outside, "Long live Queen Mary!"
Enter the QUEEN, LORD MAYOR: *Livery &c., &c.*

LORD MAYOR.

This shall be righted.

QUEEN.

Disobedient servants!
Such things ye dared not in my father's time.
O that he were alive but for a month!

MAYOR.

In faith we'll see to this.

QUEEN.

Sir, all these evils
Lie deeper than ye wot. The fount of honour
Is poisoned at its source. My grandsire, father,
And then my brother, raised base parasites
To dignities, not honour: cankered the peerage:
Tainted the prelacy with fanaticks:
Raised quibbling casuists and venal pleaders
To the judicial bench, soiling the ermine
Which should be spotless as the sleeves of Moses
When he received the tablets of the law—
There are among ye men not scrupulous;
Who don or doff their faith like roomy cloaks,
As suits occasion: men whose loyalty
To church and Queen is plastick, and fits well
The ascendant rule—These sycophants would crush
The People, overleap the Law, cajole
Their Prince, betraying all!

[*Murmurs among the Queen's suite.*

Why murmur ye?

ARUNDEL.

The People are beholden to your Grace.

QUEEN.

Not to the People only, but to you,
Likewise, I speak—proud Nobles! Be ye observant.

ARUNDEL.

In faith I see not—I—what cause we give
That thus your Grace should publicly rebuke us.

QUEEN.

'Tis for your good. Look to it. I would address
Some words to the People generally. Search out
Some platform whence my voice may freely spread.

ARUNDEL [*aside*].

Oxford, come hither—Is it not laughable
To mark the exactions of servility
Wrung by these Tudors from the best o'the land,
As the majestic Kings of olden times,
The high Plantagenets had never asked?
What—must we—Veres and Howards—truck and kneel
Before the old Knight's progeny? Shake off
Thy cerements, stout Sir Owen! and laugh out
To see what anticks thine old bones begot!

Bear we this taunting?

OXFORD.

These new men it touches;
Not us. The Yorkist chose to plant his garden
With gay weeds, not true roses: what came of it?
My grandsire smote the louts on Bosworth field,
And left the crook-back Dickon on the grass,
Outstaring the hot sun with his dead eyes.
Little deemed he when Harry Richmond donned
The crown wrenched from the Dead, that his descendants
Should thus be rated by ungrateful tongues:—

ARUNDEL.

Hush! Gardiner's heavy eye wanders: his ear
Is omnipresent as the cuckoo's voice.

OXFORD.

Hear ye the Queen! So saith mine office.

QUEEN.

Citizens!

HERALD.

Keep silence!

QUEEN.

I stand here to face all traitors;
And their weak machinations to expose!
Ye know me as I am, your rightful Queen:
And your allegiance, sworn when I was crowned,

Ye will maintain.

UNDERHILL.

That will we to the death!

MANY VOICES.

God save the Queen!

QUEEN.

Then, too, did I take oaths:
Whereof this spousal ring upon my finger
Bears witness. That I am your lawful Queen
All Christendom allows; your Parliaments
Oft have confirmed. Ye who so lovingly
Obeyed my father, ye will not now desert
His daughter, baited by unliegeful carls?

A CITIZEN.

Down with the rebel curs!

ANOTHER CITIZEN.

God bless Queen Mary!

QUEEN.

I cannot tell how, naturally, a mother
Loveth her children, for I ne'er had any:
But if our subjects may be loved as children,
Be sure that I as earnestly love you
As mothers can.

A CITIZEN.

Bless your pale face!

QUEEN.

And I

Think you love me.

A CITIZEN.

That will we, noble lady!

QUEEN.

Touching this marriage, think me not desirous
Of wedlock. Hitherto I have lived a maiden:
But were God pleased that I should leave you sons
It might be for your welfare. Yet if I saw
Aught dangerous to my People in this marriage
I would renounce it.

A CITIZEN.

May you be happy in it!

QUEEN.

On a queen's word, if my good lords and commons
Mislike this bridal, it shall never be.
Therefore pluck up your hearts—stand fast like
true men!
Nor fear those rebels whom your Queen fears not.

CITIZENS.

God bless Queen Mary, and the Prince of Spain!

QUEEN.

Mother of God! that cry is victory!

A VOICE [*behind the Queen*].

'Twere well you spake less harshly of your friends!

QUEEN.

Who said those words? Some upstart I'll be sworn!

Respect me, if but for my father's sake,
Who out of nothing made you what you are—
Oxford, your arm! your grandsire's arm at Bosworth
Nobly upheld my grandsire at his need.
Be thou his grandchild's stay. Lead on, my lord.
[*Exeunt Queen, &c. &c.*

ARUNDEL.

Ay, flattery is sweet: now Oxford's brow
Throbs for his dukedom. Is it for our sins
That we must here perforce have woman Rulers?
The barbarous Briton loved them; but we Saxons
And Normans, spurned them. Vain were thy struggles, Maude!
No sceptre graced Elizabeth of York.
But now the great stem of Plantagenet,
Reft of its males, bears none but female blossoms.
If Mary fail, Elizabeth succeeds.
The Tudor sisters dead, from Scotland then
Shall Mary Stuart ride forth: or in default
Of these, Jane Grey's young sisters, or their mother;
Or Elinor of Clifford. Welladay!
If henceforth lances must give place to needles—
Gauntleted hands to bright eyes and soft lips—
'Twere well methinks to cry, "God save King Mary!" [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Gallery over gateway, Whitehall Palace.

Queen's ladies enter in confusion: after them the QUEEN *attended by* GARDINER *and others.*

GARDINER.

MADAM, we fear all's lost if you rest here.
We pray you to take refuge in the Tower—
Your boat lies ready manned at Whitehall stairs.

QUEEN.

Fly? never! Arundel and Oxford true,
My foot stands firm!

Enter CALEY.

Sir Henry Jerningham
Bids your Grace fear not for Saint James' Tower.
Bull-headed Cobham batters it in vain.
But much we doubt weak Ludgate may be forced.

QUEEN.

What rampant knave is he, who in the front

Of brave old Gage, makes Charing pavement ring
With his black, foaming charger?

CAYLEY.

Captain Knevett.

QUEEN.

Knevett or knave—an if he spurred as hotly
As he can rein, the good old knight were down.
Ho! by the Rood! the knave can spur—and see,
Sir John rolls in the dust—O save him, knights!

GARDINER.

Will not your Grace retire? this oriel window
Is perilously sloped to rebel shafts.
What if thus stricken—

QUEEN.

Haply I should die;
And thus these woes surcease.

GARDINER.

And were that well
For England?

QUEEN.

In good sooth, I think not so.
I will be wise and wary. Lo! brave Southwell
Draws up his battle-axes in the front;
And shall protect us. [*She leans from the window.*
Gentlemen, in you
We place our trust: abandon not your post.

GARDINER.

The troops give way—

QUEEN.

Then I will lead them on!
Bring helm and cuirass—though this hand can wield
No sword, at least it can direct a horse;
And teach you how to ride a rebel down.

[*Exit attended.*

MARY DOUGLAS.

Bears not our Queen a valiant heart? Behold her
Forth issuing from the gate, beckoning her men.
Nor shot of arquebuss, nor push of pike,
Heeds she. Hark!—what a shout! Her work is done!

Re-enter the QUEEN *attended.*

QUEEN.

We have struck well: the Lord of Hosts be praised!
And rash rebellion grovels in the dust.
Vengeance has done her part. Be it our care
That no just ground of discontent remain.
Summon the council: much is to be done.

GARDINER.

An edict setting forth your Grace's title

Should be prepared.

QUEEN.

Be careful, clearing that,
To cast no stigma on my sister's birth.
Too much for England's peace may be inferred.
Enough for me that union whence I sprung,
Which Thomas Cranmer most ungodlily
And against law, by wresting texts and reason,
Dissevered, now is held inviolate.
Stablish my throne, remembering I am mortal.
Take heed to ope no quicksand that shall swallow
Succeeding thrones. Save England with my sister.
There is no evil like domestic war. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

A Street in London.

Enter Underhill *to* Sandys, Weston, *and Rioters.*

UNDERHILL.

Why come you thus abroad? the times are
wild—

SANDYS.

If the Lord be on my side, why should I fear?
Mysterious are his ways! I will endure

His chastisements—and blessed be his name!

UNDERHILL.

Pray you, retire. 'Tis an ill zeal that plucks
The beard of fortune.

SANDYS.

Edward Underhill!
I am ashamed to meet a man so changed!
That one who from the well-head undefiled
Hath tasted of eternal verities,
Should so backslide!

UNDERHILL.

I have not time to wrangle.
Firm is my faith, but I to her am loyal
Whom the Lord gives to rule o'er Israel.

SANDYS.

See ye the fruit!—A governor from God?—

UNDERHILL.

The Queen is not well served. You heard yourself,
How, leaning from the Holbein gallery,
Where she so long stood target to your shafts,
She bade her furious knights to spare; and spake
Peace to the suppliant throng.

SANDYS.

Yet your fierce captains
Do ramp along the streets with bloody staves

Hunting the white-faced citizens like rats;
Or at their own doors summarily hang them.
No house but sends forth lamentable wails
Of orphans and poor widows; wounding the ear
As harshly as their gashes do the dead.

UNDERHILL.

Not fifty thus have died—a sorrowful sum
If measured by domestic pangs—yet small
If balanced by the evil of their plots;
Small if contrasted with the precedents
Of former feuds. In Henry's time, they say,
Full seventy thousand their viaticum
Had from the hangman.

SANDYS.

Miserable Land!
See how God's wrath hath stricken! Now at length
Hath he begun to punish; as long since
Prophets have threatened. Lo! each heart, each hand,
Each tongue of Englishman is set against
His neighbour: the broad realm is rent asunder.
England! thou ship tossed on tempestuous waters!
Thy crew in mutiny—rocks on thy lee—
A maniac grasps thy helm! England! that knew'st not

When thou wert blest—now desolation sweeps
thee!
Yet, yet, obey thy God—receive his Word.
So shalt thou yet find mercy!

WESTON.

Out upon thee!
Unmannerly Ranter!

SANDYS.

Ha! I will not shrink,
From the good fight. Say on, besotted man!

WESTON.

Were ye God's children, surely God would bless
you,
And prosper your endeavours: but behold,
Your doctrine is abjured, and its professors
Most soundly rated by good men: and therefore
Ye cannot be of God.

SANDYS.

O thou Iscariot!

WESTON.

Nay, thou shalt hear me out. This is of God
Which our good Queen and Bishops do profess.
Lo! how God prospers them! How notable
The victory wherewith he hath enlarged her!
Ye Gospellers! how many have come back
From your vain texts—rejecting your vain
doctrine!

Once we had plenty in the land: but now
There's nothing like as was. But let that pass.
You thought your Gospel was ensconced for ever
With statutes: welladay! new laws pass now
Contrariwise upholding what ye banned.
This shows your doctrine cannot be God's law.

UNDERHILL.

Be thou rebuked, O Sathanas!—If men
Had godly wit, in their Queen's victory
They might discern that God would hereby win her,
By kindness to his Gospel. Furthermore
Because that they who went against her put
Their trust in carnal weapons, not the Lord;
In this they erred. Some have recanted, say you?
Yea verily:—their seed was cast on stones,
And withered. Such for gain took up the Cross;
And, for gain, lay it down. Your Parliament
Pass laws (I say it stoutly), not by reason,
But clamour. 'Tis the many not the better
Who rule. We'll bleed for this in coming time!

A CITIZEN.

Away—away—is this a time for preaching?
Away! the pitiless Riders are upon us!

[*Great uproar without—Exeunt dispersedly.*

Scene III.

Council Chamber, Whitehall,

Queen, Egmont, Renaud, Gardiner, *other Lords.*

QUEEN [*kneeling*].

God be my witness that my sole desire
Is England's welfare in this marriage. Never
Should lip of man approach my maiden cheek,
Nor change come o'er my chaste and honest life,
But that a dearer interest than mine own
Compels me. Count of Egmont, take my troth
To Philip and to Spain.

EGMONT.

And here King Philip
And Spain impledge their faith to thee and England.

MARY.

O pray with me, and for me, my good Lords,
That God may make these nuptials fortunate!

EGMONT.

I take your royal hand, and with this ring,
In my master's name, espouse you.

QUEEN.

I accept it ;
And will return him faith inviolable.

EGMONT.

May Heaven protect my Queen ! perhaps your Grace
Will deign send missives by me ?

QUEEN.

Bear my love
And gentlest commendations. 'Twere not meet
That I wrote first. Tell him—yet no : nay, tell him
I count the minutes till he come.

RENAUD.

Permit me
To be so bold as to suggest 'twere prudent
His Grace delayed, till treason be put down.
Too many prisoners your Grace releases.

QUEEN.

It was the custom of my forefathers
To pardon criminals upon Good-Friday.
I have released but eight. Of these, Northampton,
Queen Katherine Parr's own brother, took no part
In the late treasons.

RENAUD.

Pardon me—there may be
Some guiltier—our Prince must be kept back,

Should your Grace yield to mistimed clemency.
This book may show how traitors should be
crushed.

QUEEN.

My Lord, I read the Greek in his own tongue,
And need not French expositor to gloss
The venerable text. Our English law
Shall better guide us than Hellenick legends.
We lean on Alfred not Thucydides.

RENAUD.

Forgive my plainness. Can King Philip come
While criminals remain unjustified?
Your sister waits her trial.

GARDINER.

Let me speak.
While she, the Princess, lives, there is no safety
For England, for the Church. If all your servants
Went to work roundly, as I do, your Highness
Were better served—How now, Sir? whom seek
you?

Enter BRIDGES *Lieutenant of the Tower.*

BRIDGES.

Your Grace will pardon, if, in a case like this,
Your servant feels misgiving. This sealed warrant
Commands me yield the Princess; to be dealt
with

As sentence shall direct.

QUEEN.

O thou good servant!
Thy Queen, on her heart's knees, thanks and rewards thee.
Whose is this deed?—By God's death! answer me!
Ay, Gardiner, thou shalt answer for this thing,
If thou hast done it.

GARDINER.

Let me see the paper.
A sorry trick to fright the Princess—trust me,
I had no hand in it. [*He tears the warrant.*

QUEEN.

Inhuman hounds!
That worry your poor victim ere you slay it.
But I shall baulk your malice. Silence, Gardiner!
Too much already hath been said: your tongues
Are deadlier than poison. Bridges, through you,
Who pitied poor Jane Grey, I shall henceforth
Secure my sister. You have known and loved her.
You are my servant now. Receive your knighthood. [*She knights him. He retires.*

RENAUD.

My liege—for such my lord's betrothed is now—
Pardon that I have chafed you.

QUEEN.

You have waked
A devil within my heart and in my brain!
Your master, on my soul! sanctioned not this.

RENAUD.

The King wills nought which can offend his Queen.
But, Madam, you have hardly judged my words,
Misconstruing their purpose. Not the death,
But the removal of the Princess seek we.
Removal, was it not, my lord? We feared
To hurt your Grace, and spake in ambages.

GARDINER.

I meant to say, while here the Princess lives
This realm and church, are perilled. Is that false?

QUEEN.

I'll have no double-meaning speech, nor tricks
To frighten or mislead. Look to it: or bide
The consequence.

RENAUD.

Then, unambiguously,
I counsel that your Grace remove from England
The Princess by a bridegroom's sweet compulsion.
No lack of suitors. Philibert of Savoy
Proffers his hand to fair Elizabeth.

QUEEN.

We thank the princely suitor: but our sister
Mates not with the deposed of Piedmont.

RENAUD.

Perhaps your Grace would yield your royal sister
To the kind keeping of the Hungarian Queen.
With such a noble matron, watchful, virtuous,
She might rest well and safely.

QUEEN.

Be content, Sir.
My sister hath but one friend in this council;
Myself, companion of her youth. It may be
She hath compassed ill against me: yet will not I,
Who fostered her lone childhood, now destroy her
By death or exile—You are malcontent.
Conform ye to my will; I shall not swerve.

RENAUD.

The Queen's will shall be law!

QUEEN.

See well to that!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.

The Queen's Closet.

Enter Queen, *followed by* Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH.

You would not see me when I sent the ring:
The token of your love, that was to guard me
If anger grew between us.

QUEEN.

When this outbreak
First threatened, and malicious tongues impeached
My sister's faith, I sent for you to Ashridge.
I prayed you on your love to come to court,
And pledged you mine. You came not; pleaded sickness.
I waited long: then sent Lord William Howard,
Your mother's uncle, with my own litter for you,
And three physicians.

ELIZABETH.

Was I not most sick?

QUEEN.

Ay! sick at heart—sick with unlawful longings

For an untimely heritage. You sought
When circumstances frowned, and charges grew
Against you, to assail me with your tears,
Win with caresses. Then I answered—No.
We meet not till your conscience and your acts
Shall be as a crystal which the sun shines
through.

ELIZABETH.

My conscience is unflawed, unstained. You see
Shadows, not mine, behind it, not within it.
This is not just.

QUEEN.

Elizabeth I love you;
And therefore seek to favour: but I rule you.
Justice demands this of me. It was well
That by the old law, which my act restored,
I have abided: thus you rest secure,
No overt act of treason proved. I tore
The ciphered manuscripts which, they alleged,
Inculpated my Sister. God forefend
That any, far less one so dear, should fall
By evidence so easy to be forged.
You stand acquitted. God, who sees all hearts,
Grant you be clear from sin!

ELIZABETH.

Upon my knees;

And gazing on you through my streaming eyes,
I do protest my truth and loyalty—
I ask no favour, I implore no pardon.

QUEEN.

Well, well! belike as you so stiffly stand
Upon your truth, we have dealt wrongfully.

ELIZABETH.

Your Sister must not say so to your Grace.

QUEEN.

But you will so report.

ELIZABETH.

Believe me, never.
This burthen I have borne and still must bear:
Yet humbly, as your loving Sister, crave
Your kind construction.

QUEEN.

Be it so. God knoweth!
I thus replace your ring; pledge of new love.
Or innocent or guilty, I forgive you.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

Antichamber, Whitehall Palace.

Enter Gardiner *and* Fakenham.

FAKENHAM.

You seem disturbed, my Lord; yet all things prosper
Even as you wished. The King is on the sea:
The Queen right joyous in her match: the People
If far from satisfied, appeased.

GARDINER.

The People
Must be broke into questionless obedience;
Or they'll not suit King Philip. Never knew I
A horse well managed save with whip and bit.
Touching religion (thus speaks Latimer)
We must plough fast, plough deep, plough skilfully.
No less say I. The Queen is all our own.
She would press argument on argument.
But Fakenham, wot you of no shorter method
Wherewith to deal with traitors?

FAKENHAM.

We who grant
The spiritual supremacy of Popes,
Of the three parties which divide the realm
Are weakest. We are strong but in the Queen.
That church was Catholick which Henry stab-
lished;
Though Antipapal: and it stood confest
A favourite in the land, though stained with blood,
Plunder and tyranny. The Puritan,
Dexterous in reasoning, clamorous in debate,
And in his protest fierce as blatant beast,
Commands the vulgar throng.

GARDINER.

What matters it
If the Queen now strike home?

FAKENHAM.

My Lord, your cry
Is ever "Strike."

GARDINER.

And who bade Jehu strike?
Go to! Were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram
Worse men than Cranmer and his crew? I marvel
That one, knowing the Queen so inly, doubt
How she will act, if with discretion guided.
When Philip comes—soon may that be!—my
friend,

You have known Philip. Touching his externals,
I cannot praise his portrait: but his mind
Will suit us. What say you?

FAKENHAM.

A moody man,
Whose countenance is ghastly, bearing dismal:
For ever wrangling, rude. His glance is sinister—
Stealthy: his laughter a sardonic sneer.
I would rather face a vulture o'er a corpse,
Than such a man, whose hell is in himself.
He is a tree of death—

GARDINER.

Whose seed shall be
For life. Beware. You have a caustic brush:
The canvass burns beneath it.

FAKENHAM.

There are strange rumours
How that his first wife died mysteriously.

GARDINER.

Mysteriously? mysteriously? God's passion!
Women will die!—What boots it how she died?

FAKENHAM.

Much—to our Queen.

GARDINER.

You ne'er will be a Bishop—
A shrewish tongue! look you, Sir, what's to me,
Or you, or any man, how 'twas she died?

The woman's dead. God give her rest! tis well.
And he is free. Tis very well. Ask not
Why? 'twas God's will: if not, she had not died.
Enough of this—we'll talk if talk you must,
Of something profitable. Cease these jars
Answering no end, but wasting love—the Queen!

Enter QUEEN.

QUEEN.

The airy spirit of my heart takes wing,
And flies to its repose! no more my brain
Teems with fantastic images that grew
To vices in their sheer exorbitance.
I shall be all I ever hoped—yes, Fakenham,
All, with God's help, your lessons would have made me.

FAKENHAM.

May you be wise unto salvation, daughter!
Beyond this, even for my queen, I pray not.

Enter OXFORD.

OXFORD.

The King, my liege, will land this eve at Hampton.

QUEEN.

O joyful news! Haste thee—yet stay—Take this
The collar of St. George: I would have sent
The crown, if England willed it. Say that I,

Grandchild of Isabella of Castille,
Who knew so well to govern, yet obey,
Will yield implicit honour to my spouse.
Attend his Highness hither; and as beseemeth
A faithful counsellor, advise whate'er
Shall to his glory redound. Away, away!

[*Exeunt Oxford and the Queen.*

GARDINER.

Is this your statue of eternal rock,
Or adamant unshaken?—Said I not
The mood would change?

FAKENHAM.

The change was sudden.—Slowly
Her first despair to penitence gave way,
And thoughts of public duty. Duty done
Ministered peace: and health and hope succeeded.
A gradual process this. Now, like a plant
Of tropic growth, her heart sends up, renewed,
Its loving aspiration after love;
Which wife-like duty, and religious vows
Auspiciously (so seems it) shield and sanction.
God help thee, heart betrayed!

GARDINER.

God grant King Philip
Health, and a hand unsparing. So—farewell.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I.

An open space in the woods near Winchester.

Enter Philip, Egmont, *&c.* *A storm.*

PHILIP.

A SORRY day for our solemnities!
I kiss this crucifix. Avert the omen!
Most holy James of Compostella!—Halt!
A cruel wind—a rain that chills my blood!
Egmont, observed you, how those surly lords
Scowled as they rose up from their stiff-bent knees,
As though, pardie! they had a mind to say,
"Why doff you not, Sir King, your barret cap?"

EGMONT.

They shall be taught, my liege, the courtesies
And homages of Spain ere long.

PHILIP.

Good Saints!
What must I suffer in this pestilent land?

If I put off this cloak I shall be drowned;
And smothered if I wear it! There's no force
In English prayer (for surely they have prayed)
If this be a fit greeting for a Prince,
Thus wending to their ancient gentlewoman.
Egmont! methinks I spied a pretty maid
At Hampton in the church of Holy-rood,
Where we made our thanksgiving—Many such
They say this England nurtures. That is well.

EGMONT.

I trust your Grace will shrewdly take to task
This admiral Howard, who laughed to see our sailors
Elbowed and hooted when we first touched land.

PHILIP.

Ha! when have I forgotten?

EGMONT.

And that insult,
When he bade strike our topsails, as his right
From all in the narrow seas.

PHILIP.

I shall remember
The admiral when it suits me.—Who comes hither
Unlaced and hot with posting? Step you forward,
With hand upon the hilt.

Enter UNDERHILL.

UNDERHILL [*kneeling*].

The Queen sends greeting
Unto your Highness with this ring.

PHILIP.

Its purport?

UNDERHILL.

I know not.

PHILIP [*retiring*].

Nor I you. Come hither, Egmont.
You know their speech: examine him; 'tis strange.
Some token of danger it may be.

UNDERHILL.

The Queen
Hoped, lovingly, you rode not in this storm.

PHILIP.

No more than that? 'Tis well. Sir Englishman,
We knights of Spain make light of storms like these.
Nor man nor storm fear we.

UNDERHILL.

Dread not the first.
Lord King! we Britons strike in war alone.

PHILIP.

I am glad to know it. Sharp in retort I see.

Your English way I trow: but hark you, sir,
'Tis scarcely safe to bandy words with Kings;
Or hang too closely on their skirts, to catch
The careless thought just trickling into speech.
My Lady's servant, prithee look to this.
On, sir! what, Egmont, may we trust our guide?

EGMONT.

I'll warrant him a trusty.

PHILIP.

It were needful.
Choked with this sleet, half smothered in these bogs—
What a climate! what a country! what a people!
Yet doth my stomach yearn for sack and manchet.
Truly your hunger is a grievous thing,
Yea an unruly! If he delay, good Egmont,
Just hint what perils edge a prince's anger.
They say your Saxon churl loves generous viands—
Methinks they are scanty, or the mouths too many.
What crowds blackened the beach! each rock, each hill
Looked verminous with dusky multitudes—
If God take none to his glory, there shall be lack.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.

Cathedral interior, Winchester.

Enter to marriage ceremonial, Underhill, Sandys, *&c. The storm continues.*

SANDYS.

This is the consummation of our wrongs—
O wicked match! and none will have more cause
To rue it than this woman.

UNDERHILL.

God forbid it!

SANDYS.

Forbid this match; but not its consequence.
She doth contemn God's word—her father's laws—
And brands her brother as a heretick.
Yea, barters her broad kingdom for this tyrant.

UNDERHILL.

I mourn these things with you—all past amendment.

SANDYS.

Lo! how these Dons vaingloriously come prancing!

Castile and Arragon shall lord it well,
In London city. Have a care, my masters!
Of your fair dames, domains, and equipage,
Your shady forests, and well-stocked preserves—
The spoiler's furtive eye now gloats upon them!

UNDERHILL.

You'll be observed.

SANDYS.

I care not. See, base Gardiner
Rolls onward like a shark gaping for prey.
Shall nothing glut thy maw, foul beast—betrayer
Of thine own land—salesman of liberty?

Enter BISHOPS OF LONDON, WINCHESTER, DURHAM, *&c. After them* PHILIP *and suite: then* QUEEN MARY, ELIZABETH, MARGARET DOUGLAS, GAGE, *Nobles, &c.*

GAGE [*to Sandys*].

Keep silence, Doctor Sandys, or you shall rue it.

UNDERHILL.

Nay, hold thy peace: if careless of thyself,
Spare one who brought thee hither.

HERALD.

Silence, Sirs!

FIGUEROA.

I, Count of Figueroa, Regent of Naples,

Salute the Queen of England, in the name
Of the most potent Charles, the Emperor;
Who this day by my hand, resigns his kingdoms
Of Naples and Jerusalem to Philip,
His much loved son: and doth hereby declare
His pleasure in this bridal; mating thus
Royal to Royal. If impediment
Be known to any, let him speak.

[*King and Queen approach the Altar. The storm encreases—thunder and lightning.*

SANDYS [*speaking from the crowd*].

A voice
From heaven replies in anger: and a voice
From man in warning: and a cry, O Queen!
From the universal Church—beware, beware!

PHILIP.

Saint Jago! wherefore seize ye not the traitor?
Ha! brave Castilian Knights!

GARDINER [*aside*].

Heed him not, Sire.
Some solitary malcontent—I know him.
Dungeon and rack shall not be spared. [*Aloud*] Who gives
The Queen away? [*a pause*] Whose oversight is this?
Fools! not to have foreseen so plain a case. [*Aside.*

Who gives her Grace away, I ask?

[*Pembroke, Derby, and Bedford approach.*

We give her,

In the name of the whole realm.

PEOPLE AROUND.

God save the Queen!

God save King Philip likewise!

[*Philip offers a diamond ring.*

QUEEN.

Nay, my Lord,—

I would be wed like any other maiden

With the plain hoop of gold.

PHILIP [*putting on a gold ring*].

Then thus I wed thee.

[*Proclamation of style—Jubilant music—the Procession retires from the Church. The storm continues.*

SANDYS.

A heavier day for England and the Church

Never hath closed in tempest. Lo! the heavens

Do speak their malison! it is God's anger

That flashes round us! mark these omens well.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

Hatfield.

Elizabeth *alone.*

ELIZABETH.

Man fears too much—too soon—too causelessly!
Again I live for hope—despond no more!
O Hope! whose wings fan heaven, I woo thee back
To earth, thy needful home; the tilth whereon
We shake thy goodly seed. To sow—to reap—
Are they not one? the effort is fruition!

Enter Egmont, Oxford, *&c.*

How now? I would be mistress of my time—
Why come ye, Sirs, unbid?

EGMONT.

With missives, Madam,
From my lord King. Methinks they'll please you well.

ELIZABETH.

Sincerity is Honour's nursing mother!
I tell thee, Spaniard, nought from him shall please.

EGMONT.

My lord of Oxford shall avouch—

ELIZABETH.

Say on.

EGMONT.

The King's grace, and the Queen, with hearty love
Commend them to your Highness; hailing you
Right heiress of the realm. The Council, too,
In such wise add their duty.

ELIZABETH.

With equal greeting
Elizabeth replies; thanking the People--
The People first, the People last, and only;
Who ever have upheld and will sustain her;
As her undoubted blood and taintless right—
(Ay taintless right in eyes ye cannot blind)
Demand. And, noble Spaniard, hear me further:
There lives within this heart a stirring pulse
Which shall make good its royal destinies.

EGMONT.

The People! weather-cocks your Grace may find them.
Be wary.

ELIZABETH.

Sir, contemn them not! who makes

A mirror of the sapphire or the diamond—
And not betakes him rather to plain glass,
Within whose broad reflexion we behold
Truth undistorted?

EGMONT.

Madam, I have done.
But do they murmur? are not the People quiet?

ELIZABETH.

Ay, sir, as slaves! the free proclaim their griefs,
Like beggars in the street. The slave who fears
In every hand a lash, is voiceless. He
Who under wrong is silent, hoards his vengeance.
Fear most who least complain. Judge, Sir, how far
I am beholden to King, Queen, or Council—
Or Nobles of the land. What friends stand by me?
Faithful in danger? Wooton, Mason, Cecil.
These are not Nobles—noble though they be.
Strong in the People's love, dare ye assail them?
Behold where lies my safety!

EGMONT.

Not less safe
Shall be the Court, to which we sue your presence.

ELIZABETH.

Sir, be content. I go not yet. My sister
Must, as a wife, be to her spouse compliant.

And thus that rule prevail which I abhor.

OXFORD.

Madam, not so. The Queen's known constancy,
Proved thoroughly when the need was exigent,
Shows she will nothing yield adverse to honour,
Through weakness. Wives may be submiss to husbands:
But a wise Queen shall seek wise counsellors,
Whereby ensue wise measures.

ELIZABETH.

She shall seek
And shall not find—my father never found them.
Wise counsellors shall for themselves be wise,
And lock their lips. The King shall name the Council.

OXFORD.

Madam, in England Parliament hath power
To chain up sycophants and bridle tyrants.

ELIZABETH.

You may so say. Pray God it prove so! but
There shall be much ado. Have you not travelled?
How rule the Spaniards (pardon, Count of Egmont!)
In Naples, Sicily, and Lombardy?
Are these oppressed not? Say, are bonds and buffets

To them unknown? look too for these in England.
Gently and fairly shall they speak at first:
But waxing strong, then shall they filch your ships,
Your forts—usurp your offices; ascending
The topmost tower of tyrannous acquest.

EGMONT.

Rule we in Flanders thus? Are Englishmen
Compliant beyond Flemings?

ELIZABETH.

Peradventure
If tempted sorely, we may not content you.

EGMONT.

There shall be no temptation.

ELIZABETH.

None? so be it!
My lords, ye have my answer. Fare ye well!

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene IV.

Queen's Cabinet, Whitehall.

Queen, Philip, Gardiner, *Lords and Council.*

QUEEN.

I am far from well, my lords, as you may see.
God lays a heavy hand on me. His will

Be done! I take the privilege of sickness
To meet you here, not in full parliament.
Before the coming of his Eminence
The Legate, hourly looked for, I would explain
Our exigencies.

PEMBROKE.

Without doubt your Grace
Should have full satisfaction.

QUEEN.

I would urge you
(What less shall please, but to your souls hereafter
Be of true comfort) that you reconsider
The Church's claim for spoils that you have
taken—

PEMBROKE.

Your father took—

QUEEN.

Well, Sir, he took for you.

PEMBROKE.

Our swords protect the Church: our lands sur-
rendered,
Our swords are swords of glass.

QUEEN.

Greedy—too greedy—
Are ye, my lords, of pelf. I find you, truly,
Pliant, fair-spoken: but, your mammon touched,

The lands filched from the Church, ye tap your
swords,
And cry, "We part not with our abbey spoils!"

PEMBROKE.

They were fair grants, the guerdon of fair service.
Your father's gift our swords are bound to guard.

QUEEN.

So be it! I must be content, I see,
With setting good example. I devote
What to the crown pertains to foster learning,
And feed the poor.

PEMBROKE.

How then support the crown,
With an impoverished purse?

QUEEN.

Sir, I prefer
My peace of conscience to all crowns of earth.
[*A discharge of ordnance without.*

Enter SIR JOHN GAGE.

GAGE.

The Cardinal Legate's boat hath touched the
beach.

QUEEN.

The Cardinal arrived! my dear, dear Cousin!
Go, my lord Chamberlain,—go, Sir John Gage,

And bear our greetings to his Eminence.
Let his Legantine cross be borne before him;
And all appliances of holy state
Attend his blessed footsteps. This, our King,
And we, shall welcome him on Whitehall stairs.

[*Exeunt Oxford and Cecil.*

PHILIP.

You are right gracious to the Cardinal.
In Spain we condescend less.

QUEEN.

Ah! you'll love him,
As I do, when familiarly you know him.

PHILIP.

I somewhat doubt it. You were sick, you said;—
Too sick to issue forth and meet your Commons.

QUEEN.

'Tis but a score of paces. I would fain
Show fitting reverence to a holy man.

PHILIP.

As you will, Madam. Ho! the pageant waits.
Her Highness' self shall usher through the gates!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

Council Chamber, Whitehall. Queen *and* King *throned. Lords, &c. seated round.*

Enter Cardinal Pole, *attended by Prelates, &c.*

GARDINER.

The parliament of England heartily
Speaks welcome to your Eminence. My lords
Of the upper house! my masters of the nether!
I here present to you the most reverend father,
Lord Cardinal de la Pole; Legate a latere
From the Apostolick See; ambassador
On the weightiest matters which can affect the realm.
My lords, lean to him with accordant ears.

CARDINAL.

Since it hath pleased the Almighty counsels, Madam,
To call you to this throne, and worthily
Wed to a Prince, the first in Christendom,
Your realm hath cause for high content. It stood
O'er an abyss, now pierced with hopeful light:
The day hath dawned so passionately longed for:
To the life of God's own children we are reborn!

Behold, with outstretched arms the ancient Faith
Comes to your gates, asking the crowns and palms
Wherewith your pious ancestors endowed her.
Once more knit up her trodden robe! once more,
O froward children, hear her maternal voice!
Return to her beneath whose sacred mantle
Salvation can alone be found. Be sure
The light devolving from great Gregory
Still shines from Peter's chair. Who turns from it
Renounces hope. Peace ripens in its beams!
Return O Shunamite! return fair Island!
Appease thy terrors—all shall be restored!
The morn hath come, the works of darkness perished!
Henceforth thou walkest in the light of God.

QUEEN.

O noble kinsman! virtuous Reginald!
We thank thy zeal and shall make fitting answer
To thy high mission. I have survived despair.
A helpless virgin hath our Ladie favoured;
And won her battle. Faith hath piloted
This shattered barque at length to a happy haven.
Here stand we, without question, King and Queen:
And, with our Parliament, implore the Pope
For reconciliation. Take this missive:

It is sincere. Kneeling we crave your blessing!

PHILIP.

Your Eminence shall pardon my stiff knees—
Stiff, Spanish manners. Ha! I cannot kneel.

CARDINAL.

With overflowing heart, I bless thee, daughter—
And bless, in thee, thy People—Help!—she faints!

QUEEN [*aside*].

Make no alarm. This may perchance give joy
To loyal hearts. O bliss beyond expression,
If God vouchsafe to crown the desolate
With bloom of her own garden!

CARDINAL [*aside*].

What means this?

FAKENHAM [*aside*].

Vain dream of hope! more sorrows are to come.

SCENE VI.

Palace, Whitehall.

QUEEN, PHILIP, GARDINER, POLE.

QUEEN.

You will not go so soon?

PHILIP.

Why should I stay?

My counsel goes for nought, backed though it be
By your wise Chancellor.

QUEEN.

Alas! I know not
In what I have denied you; save this only—
Recourse to death and torture: when my heart,
My judgement, yea my conscience, dictates rather
The force of free discussion.

GARDINER.

Pardon, Madam.
Reason no eye-salve brings to men whose will
Shuts out the truth—

QUEEN.

But have you fairly tried it?

PHILIP.

What call you fair? If to probe truth and find it
Even in men's vitals; dragging crime to light,
As doth our holy office in Castile,
Be just—and who so bold as to deny it?—
Then is it just to use all cogent means
Which shall extort confession. We rout foxes
With fagot from their holes: why not unkennel
With fire the vermin which infest the state?

CARDINAL.

Forbear, my Lord, by forced analogies
To blind plain reason. Even those Puritans

Are rational; and better may be won
By logick, than affrighted by brute strokes.

PHILIP.

Your Eminence hath powers of persuasion
Unknown to me. I have no time for talk.
(Preserve me from all babblers!)—I love listeners.
My maxim is, compel men to their good:
And if they thank you not—the fault is theirs.
What say you, Chancellor?

GARDINER.

Your Grace speaks wisely;
And shrewdly to the purpose.

QUEEN.

The laws of England
Provide sworn juries; fellows of the accused;
To hear the evidence, and give their verdict,
Leaning to mercy.

GARDINER.

Under correction, Madam,
Of judges versed in law.

PHILIP.

Ay, ay, my Aunt—
Your Mother—sometime Queen of this good land—
This land of equal laws—veracious juries—
Had what you call fair trial! let me see—

Bishop, your predecessor, Doctor Cranmer,
Was the assessor—judge—or advocate—
(Saint Jago! what know I of your law jargon?)
In that fair process: and for his fair demeanour
Therein, our Queen now tenderly entreats him!
It stirs my bile to hear such squeamish cries
As certain dames—no babes God wot—and gallants
Disguised in petticoats like dowagers,
Raise at the sight of blood.

QUEEN.

My lord, my lord!
Degrade me not; yourself, my lord, degrade not!
I am unworthy as a woman—none
Knows better—be not angry that I weep—
But ah! forget not thus I am thy wife—
Thy Queen.

PHILIP.

Ha! Ha!

QUEEN.

King Philip, dare you make
A jest of all things holy? can you wound
The heart that loves you?

PHILIP.

Madam, I am grave.
But I am not to be cajoled—with tears;

And whining posies; and dramatic rant.
This hand (nay, I will hold it while I please)
You gave in pledge of conjugal obedience.
I condescended to advise, when right
Entitled to command. The obstinate
I thought to shame with raillery: but, look you,
I have not sold my youthful liberty
By this ill-sorted spousal—

QUEEN.

Outraged! outraged!
Why sought you then this spousal?—

PHILIP.

Why? great kingdoms
May be compacted thus. My father willed it—
Sage counsellors advised. Were these not reasons?
But hear ye, Queen and wife, if here my will
Be not obeyed, I will not here abide;
But cast you from me—thus.

[*Queen sinks down.*

CARDINAL.

Now I must speak
Or die!—

GARDINER.

Hush, hush!

CARDINAL.

Thou traitor to the altar!

Bethink thee—marriage is a sacrament
Which to profane is deadly! Look on her
Who gave thee all her wealth, her crown, her people;
And, above all, her virgin heart and person;
And hoped thee her true helpmate through this world,
Nor in the world to come to be divided.
And now you shake her from you as an asp—
Or poisonous froth shot from a rabid lip!

PHILIP.

Were I a basilisk I'd look thee dead!
Out—vermin!

CARDINAL.

No! my lord. The church hath thunders:
Suspended hang they o'er thy head—beware!

GARDINER.

Pray you, retire.

CARDINAL.

Not so. My heart is strong:
And like some stalwart wrestler, who hath need
Of exercise, and doubts nor heart nor limb,
I shrink not from the combat. He who carries
His Cross, a daily burthen, well may stand
In front of any giant of the ring
Who boasts he can move spheres.

PHILIP.

My lord of Winton,
Let the poor player say on. We can afford,
Smiling, to look down on his petty stage—
And meditate—his guerdon.

CARDINAL.

Ay: you are great
Above us by your station, as the vulture
Upon his mountain pinnacle. What then?
The arrow makes a pathway on the air;
The peasant's hands can reach the feathered
tyrant,
And from the vale quench his despotick eye.
Sir, you have heard the truth now I have spoken.

PHILIP.

Once and too much.

QUEEN.

Ah me! [*she swoons*].

PHILIP.

Go, call her surgeon.
Remove her to her chamber—a good riddance!

CARDINAL.

Hard as the millstone, and as cold! King Philip!
There is a book in heaven wherein the deeds
Of men are graven.

PHILIP.

Sir, you may retire—
Surely you heard me not?—you may retire!
Begone!—it is my pleasure!

CARDINAL.

I depart.
My place is otherwhere. Never henceforth,
Transgressor, shall I meet thee, face to face,
Until thy sin by penitence be absolved! [*Exit.*

GARDINER.

A pestilent hot headed fool!

PHILIP.

A sample
Of English talking on Italian thinking.
In Spain we think—and act—not speak. Is he
A heretick? the late Pope had misgivings:—
The man out-braved them. Next, at Rome they sought
To make him Pope: and that he may be yet.
It were not well—[*pause*] we must consider this.
Pope? never! Lambeth? Ha! Gardiner—a word.
Think you one may be found—a witness—ha?—

GARDINER.

Trust me.

PHILIP [*whispers*].

Like you not this Naboth's vineyard?

Tush man! should Pole be Primate? Are there none
Can testify of this man—so and so?—
Shall Pole, I say, be Primate?

GARDINER.

God forbid it!

PHILIP.

Be sure he'll not forbid, if man allows it.
See well to this. Gardiner, wert thou Archbishop,
This land were cleansed anon. Look to't, I say.

GARDINER.

Who to great Philip's will shall answer nay?

[*Exeunt.*

Scene VII.

The Queen's Closet, Whitehall.

Queen, Margaret Douglas, Fakenham.

QUEEN.

I am lighter, gentle cousin. What hath chanced,
That thus of strength and sense I lie bereft?

MARGARET.

Sleep on—you need refreshment: need all powers
Of your great intellect and noble courage.

Sleep and awake for action.

QUEEN.

I am ready.
Let me consider—dim, dim, dim, the vision—
And dark with heavy clouds—but they disperse—
Gradually, slowly—Ha! the blow comes back!
If stung and stunned—it stings again; but stuns not.
Hold—let me think—what's to be done? poor heart!
Thou wilt not break! insult unmitigated!
Witnessed—by him!—by Pole! O Reginald!
Avenged!

MARGARET.

What means she?

FAKENHAM.

Hear, but mark not.—Daughter!

QUEEN.

Ay, call me thus: thy spiritual child;
Humble and needing love,—albeit a sinner.

FAKENHAM.

A sinner surely! who hath not sinned? but now
Much sinned against.

QUEEN.

Feed not with idle comfort.
Sin earns its shame. Feeble and worthless am I.
Something here—in my burning heart and brain—

Tells me I yet shall be all good men's loathing.
O mercy, heaven! I shudder at myself.
At once to love and hate, caress—revenge!
Hide me, good angels!

FAKENHAM.

Daughter, what is this?
Think not so falsely of thyself.

QUEEN.

Ay, Fakenham!
Wouldst thou too pamper pride? O, Sir, beware!
To sap the sense of shame is to make pillage
Of the soul's chastity.

FAKENHAM.

Restrain, I pray you,
This vehemence of passion, that from the height
Of just resentment hurls you to despair.

QUEEN.

Pray for me, father.

FAKENHAM.

Join with me in prayer.
What should avail my prayers, if yours are dumb?

QUEEN.

I ask but prayer: I seek no miracle.
Though holy prayer availed to part the sea—
Though prayer brought manna from the fruitful cloud—

And water from the rock—and caused the sun
O'er Gibeon to stand still. Such miracles
I ask not; nor, entreated, would expect.
But pray for me, that, even as the thief
On the third cross, I may have peace in heaven.
I am sinking—sinking—sinking! Pray, or I
perish!

Enter an Usher.

USHER.

The King, may it please your Grace.

QUEEN [*springing up*].

The King! King Philip!
O speed him hither! stay: here's for thy news—
A jewel from my finger. Haste thee, friend!

Enter PHILIP *moodily.*

QUEEN.

O Philip, Philip! art thou come to me!
And shall there not be now an end of weeping?
I was thinking of thee—whom else think I of?
I talked of thee—of whom is all my talking?
But thou art here again: and my poor heart,
Like a caged bird, is beating at its bars,
To fly forth to the comfort of thy bosom.
Speak—speak—my soul! and give me peace.

PHILIP.

How's this?

Are we alone?

QUEEN.

No, surely: Margaret,
And my good confessor—

PHILIP.

I am not blind.
There stand they, with wide eyes, and open ears;
Eaves droppers—spies. You hear me, Sir and madam?

FAKENHAM.

We but await her Grace's pleasure.

QUEEN.

Go!
Go, quickly;—go! ah my dear lord, I saw not
Aught but my husband. Am I pardoned?

PHILIP.

Mary!

QUEEN.

Blessings upon thee for that little word!

PHILIP.

I have pondered much of late—I have weighed—I say—
These differences—working to estrangement—
You mark me?

QUEEN.

Breathlessly.

PHILIP.

Ay—where was I?
The estrangement—wrought by interloping
priests—
And meddling confessors—and confidants—
Hark ye, your confidants, or man, or woman,
Are pestilent—eschew them—

QUEEN.

I would wish
To shape myself in all things to your wishes.

PHILIP.

Compliant helpmate! then we have not quarrelled?

QUEEN.

Ah, Philip, spare me!

PHILIP.

Saint Jago! hear her!
Spare? have I struck thee? bared my poniard
to thee?
Poisoned thy cup?

QUEEN [*faintly smiling*].

Thou art not dangerous.

PHILIP.

I know not that—I must be short with you.
I cannot abide your Cardinal.

QUEEN.

My Cardinal?—

PHILIP.

Well: the Pope's legate: Reginald de la Pole.
Despatch him.

QUEEN.

My good lord?

PHILIP.

Ah! you mistake.
Not in that sense—just now. Yet 'twere not ill.

QUEEN.

I trust we still talk riddles to each other.
What is your purpose?

PHILIP.

As to that—but no—
The time must ripen. What I would have—now—
Is simply the removal of this Legate.
(The Pope shall soon recall him—if all live)
You must reject him from your presence:
spurn him,
As I this cushion.

QUEEN.

Wherefore do you hate him?

PHILIP.

Call it not hatred, but antipathy:
Such as the callow chicken feels for hawks,
Or wild horse for the wolf. Aversion call it:
That wraps me in a cold and clammy horror

When we approach. I know he cannot harm me;
And have small doubt, he would not if he could.
But still, my flesh creeps if I do but touch him,
As when one strokes a cat's hair 'gainst the grain.
If he looks grave, I straight grow cholerick;
If cheerful, I abhor him; when he laughs,
My vitals sicken. Odious is his garb
Of ostentatious purple; jewelled hands;
That beard down-streaming like the chissel'd locks
Of Moses from the hand of Angelo.—

QUEEN.

Why what is this but hate—brute, undiscerning:
The hate that grows in too self-loving hearts?

PHILIP.

I thank thee, loving mistress, for that taunt.
What more?

QUEEN.

Bear with me: my heart throbs to bursting.

PHILIP.

Well then—if full confession please thee better—
Think I do hate him—What say you now?

QUEEN.

Just heaven!
To hate God's image thus, without a cause,
Is to hate God; and wound him through his work.
This was the sin that hurled the Archangel down

From Heaven to Hell's abysses: this the sin
That drave forth Cain, a branded wanderer!
Let it be cleansed and shriven—or you shall go
To your account hereafter, linked with these.

PHILIP.

And if so, were not these the mighty Ones
Of Earth and Hades? you are much too flippant.
Blame you not God, blaming his instruments?
And such are Kings: such Attila, God's scourge:
Such he who the earlier Becket slew: such Mary,
Whom after times may call the bloody Queen.

QUEEN.

Indeed I have done much—may God forgive me!
Pray for me, Jane! linked with thy Dudley, pray!

PHILIP.

Arouse thee, woman! thou shall yet do deeds
To earn that name indeed.

QUEEN.

What stab comes next?

PHILIP.

Who told thee I could stab? speak, idiot, speak!

QUEEN.

Believe it, I meant nothing—you affright me.

PHILIP.

Then, meaning nought, speak less. Attend to me.
I have directed Gardiner to impart

My final, stern resolve touching these prelates;
Felons heretical. They must die: or thou
And I meet never more.

QUEEN.

I do but dream—
It cannot be—thou canst not be so cruel.
Unsay it!

PHILIP.

Thou canst dream; well know I that—
I never. Would that I could learn of thee!
I will not say it again; but see you do it:
Or—

QUEEN.

Oh be silent! let me think—go not.

PHILIP.

Farewell! till you have thought upon this matter.

QUEEN.

Go not!

PHILIP.

When you are tractable—

QUEEN.

Oh go not!

PHILIP.

I shall take thought on my return. Till then,
Take my farewell!

QUEEN.

I cannot lose thee thus—
I cannot lose thee now—my heart is breaking!

[*Philip goes out. Queen sinks in a passion of grief. Scene closes.*

SCENE VIII.

A Chamber, Whitehall Palace.

PHILIP, *apart: Enter* GARDINER *and* BONNER.

GARDINER.

He's in a moody temper. How he'll chafe,
Hearing my conference with her Grace!

BONNER.

And message.
Will he bear this? and not be dangerous?
His Spanish gentry tell strange tales.

GARDINER.

Hurt us?
Tut, man! Who strikes off hands for their offence—
Or plucks an eyeball out because it frets?

PHILIP.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! [*He rises and walks up and down.*

BONNER.

Why does he laugh so grimly?
And rub his hands so fiercely, and pluck his
beard?

GARDINER.

His way—his way. When any new conceit
Of pleasurable malice takes his fancy,
'Tis ever thus.

BONNER.

Well: God gives instruments.
We'll not complain.

GARDINER [*kneeling*].

My liege!

PHILIP [*starting*].

How now? how now?
Why come you on me suddenly? Ho! Egmont!

GARDINER.

Matters of privacy, my lord—we came
Duly announced. Your pardon.

PHILIP.

I was musing.
The feather of a pleasant phantasy
Tickled me, and I laughed—did I not laugh?

GARDINER.

Right joyfully methought.

PHILIP.

There you mistook.
I never laugh for joy. My lady Queen?
What said she to our message touching Pole?

GARDINER.

That she will not desert a faithful servant.

PHILIP.

Ha! ha! why see you now, I laugh again.
This was foreseen. A missive for the Pope.
A word aside with you. Bonner's a butcher
Whom, wanting, we employ; but not consult.
If the Pope prove refractory, like Queens—
Doth England hold no pet Campagna, teeming
With deadly fogs? the Legate should breathe such.
You comprehend.

GARDINER.

May heaven be merciful
To sinners! Justice must be executed:
Else were the throne a ball of emptiness
For every knave to kick.

PHILIP.

You are quick-witted.
I like you well. What of the heretick Bishops?

GARDINER.

Why there, my liege, my argument hath prospered.

PHILIP.

Her hand if once with blood incarnadined
She'll love it as the henna dye is loved
In Moorish harems. To your tasks, Sir Bishops!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IX.

Palace Court, Whitehall.

Enter Underhill *and* Doctor Sandys.

UNDERHILL.

Where loitered you, my friend, when, yestereve,
We held our revels on the banks of Thame?

SANDYS.

The grave-yard's gloom, where slaughtered Christians sleep,
Was better for my purpose, and my mood,
Than timeless mirth, godless festivities.
O Underhill!

UNDERHILL.

Remember; to make sure,

We must prepare the way. Elizabeth,
If Mary die, is our true hope. To swell
Her triumph, was to smooth her upward path.

SANDYS.

Whence comes this favour long delayed?

UNDERHILL.

'Twas thus.
You prophesied aright. Philip controls,
Derides, the Queen: as this new persecution
Demonstrates. Fearful tales creep through the palace—
Of which hereafter.

SANDYS.

You beheld the pageant.
How looked the Princess—? say.

UNDERHILL.

Her royal barge
Was garlanded with flowers, festooned around
An awning of green satin, richly broidered
With eglantine and buds of gold. The bright one
Beneath this canopy reclined in state,
Fairer than Cleopatra with her Roman.
Her royal sister on the bowery shore
Of Richmond met her, kissing her 'tween whiles;
Her wan cheek flushing to a healthier glow.
With hospitable care, and love, she led

Elizabeth, to where, shrined in green leaves
And flowers, a tent, curtained with cloth of gold,
And purple samite, stood; whose folds were wrought
With silver fleur de lys, and gold pomegranates.
The music they so love breathed in their ears,
Like amorous blandishment: and when the morn
Rippled along the wave with soberer ray
The Princess stept once more into her barge,
And floated down the current, like a swan.

SANDYS.

God's blessing on her! hope of this poor land!

UNDERHILL.

King Philip's hateful eye loved not the scene.
I marked his sidelong glance, with half-shut lids
Averted, soon as marked. The Queen, at parting,
Whispered, I know not what, through tearful smiles:—
They seemed to say "Hail heiress of my Kingdom!"
And proud was she that day of her fair sister.

SANDYS.

When last I saw the princess she seemed worn,
With watchfulness.

UNDERHILL.

But she hath triumphed now

O'er slander. Philip too is most observant—
But that is dangerous. A noble creature
Is she, in faith! the fiery spirit sparkles
From her large eyes, whether in joy or anger.
Her carriage stately and regardant, firm
As a soldier, fearless in the midst of danger.
She stood like Pallas mid the fabled Gods!

SANDYS.

O man with boyhood's heart!

UNDERHILL.

Hear me. In her
Study hath wakened wisdom. She is bold
In counsel, as enlightened; clear, discerning,
Magnanimous, authoritative; yet ever
Most gracious in demeanour. She will be
The glory of her time. Soft—here comes Gardiner.
Fly, Sandys, fly—even I am perilled by him.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene X.

Chamber in the Cardinal's House.

Pole, *solus.*

CARDINAL.

I am sick to death of these perplexed intrigues—
Barbarous devices—lying plots. O God!
Self interest depraves all hearts—a mammon
Preaching a spurious gospel; whereunto
Millions bend down the knee. Their gods are gold.
They worship those who give them what they crave.
Their very piety is mercenary,
Besieging saints for their peculiar gain.
This measuring all things by one's proper greed
Is the heart's penury. Utility
To these is as the mother of the Gods!

Enter Gardiner *and* Fakenham.

Ay—here comes one!—I sent for you, my lord.
Daily these rash enormities augment.

GARDINER.

My lord, methinks that when the Queen approves—

CARDINAL.

Consents, Sir: she approves not. Caution Bonner.
He is excessive in severities.
These burnings must have end: I'll have it so.
He doubts my power, my inclination knowing:
But he shall find what power a Legate hath,
If he provoke me.

FAKENHAM.

This is seasonable.
These words shall save full two and twenty lives.

GARDINER.

And lose their souls, which earthly pangs might cleanse.

CARDINAL.

'Tis well to give men time for penitence.
The living, not the dead, most need our prayers.

GARDINER.

I scarcely think so. Dead, they sin no more.

CARDINAL.

I have not present leisure to discuss
Abstruse points with your lordship.

GARDINER.

Pardon me,
That I suggest, if other than a friend
Caught what your Eminence hinted at but now,

He might not deem it strictly orthodox.

CARDINAL.

If any dare accuse, I answer him.
Good day, my lord.

GARDINER.

One word—these Hereticks
Wax stout. They scoff our priests—nay call them knaves—
Hear that!

CARDINAL.

I doubt not there are many knaves.

GARDINER.

Well, well! in every house, and way side inn
They do revile the sacrament. Prayer, fasting,
Are not regarded: but, in lieu thereof,
Unseemly riot; boastfulness, as though
No honourable lords with full commission
Went softly through the land to mend its manners.

CARDINAL.

Leave the commissioners, my lord of Winton,
To patch their crazy vessels where they find them.
As for the knaves you blame, put them in the stocks.
Good day, my lord, again. [*Exit Gardiner.*] Alas! my friend,

I faint beneath this burden, staggering blindly
From pitfall on to pitfall. The King hates me;
This Gardiner would supplant me: the Queen falters.
They fire her soul, and terrify at once,
Alternating, like double-weaponed Furies,
The torch and snake. Alas! alas! for her!

FAKENHAM.

I have observed, my lord, your failing strength;
And fancied it were time you left this court,
In search of health renewed. It dwells not here.
Elsewhere it may.

CARDINAL.

I seek not earthly blessings.
Frail are they as the hands that can dispense them.
Shall I ask health from one as sick as I?
Life from mere mortals? riches from the poor?
Amid a thousand evils that assail us
We may find some to pity, whom to help us?
Men get but windy words who crave advice:
And when fools call their several Joves to aid,
In place of logs he sends them hungry storks.

FAKENHAM.

Alas! you speak as one forespent with grief.
Be roused! How many watch your eye for cheer!

CARDINAL.

The halcyon's nest was built of thorns—so mine:
Floating on restless waters—such my fortunes!

FAKENHAM.

Nay, speak not thus. The conference approaches
With the protesting Prelates. Who but you
Shall justly deal by them—convince and save
them?
Brace up your mind.

CARDINAL.

These failing limbs forbid!
But I will strive. What load thus weighs me
down?
On me the stress of many a storm hath leaned,
And rested on my steadfastness, as wind
That beats in vain some granite ridge which severs
The north and south; nor shakes with any blast.
—I have heard of vampyre poisons, that can lull,
Even as—unworthy thought! I'll not suspect.

FAKENHAM.

For the Queen's sake, for England's, droop not
now.

CARDINAL.

The clouds of night droop round our fated House!
Plantagenet and Tudor soon will be
Unheeded names. Earth passeth from our grasp:
May heaven be sure!—A sudden sunburst!—Lo!

God's Image in our heart is as yon orb
Unto the universe; the eye of nature,
Dispersing rays more eloquent than tongues;
Beams that give life, as well as light: whose absence
Wraps in cold shadow all that moves and breathes.
At times that Image walks through spheres remote;
Unobvious to the largely wandering eye—
Then night-mare darkness sits upon the soul:
Then, by its own shade mantled, waits the soul,
Like some dark mourner, lonely in his house.
But the harmonious hours fulfil themselves;
And sunrise comes unlooked for, peak to peak
Answering in spiritual radiance—This is indeed,
So palpably to meet Divinity,
That hence the Pagan erred, not knowing God.
—But, my good Fakenham, I called you hither
For conference, not sermons. Let us retire
To my more private closet; and prepare
Our thought for combat with the schismatick.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I.

The Queen's Closet. Queen *alone.*

QUEEN.

HOW great were man without his appetites—
The sensual impulses that brand our nature!
Then were we all intelligence like Angels;
And the enlarged developement of mind
Might grapple with eternal verities;
And virtue be, once more, a primal instinct.
[*She takes a paper from a table.*
—Why did I leave thee there—thou basilisk—
To fascinate mine eyes?—again I read thee—
O insult upon insult! shame on shame!
What gibbeted in ballads? get thee gone!
[*Flings it aside.*
Though 'twere the last time, Philip, we must meet:
And my despairing cry shall reach thee yet!
[*Rests her head on the table.*

Enter MARGARET.

QUEEN.

Is it the King?—speak quickly—comes he not?

MARGARET.

The Chancellor; may it please you.

QUEEN.

It doth not please.
Yet hold—I must concentrate thought—recall him!—
This dreaming while awake is dangerous:
I must eschew it; or I shall act dreams;—

Enter GARDINER.

And so men think me mad—All postures tire.
I'll sit me down. This chamber is too small
For one long used to pace and muse. I love
To talk in exercise—come you from the King?—
Build me some gallery full of light and air—
Your purpose?—speak! speak! speak!

GARDINER [*kneeling*].

With your permission,
A letter from the Pope, touching my lord
The Cardinal.

QUEEN.

The Cardinal?—fly, Margaret,

And call my friend. Wait till he come.
[*Apart.*] This friendship
Doth like a thoughtful builder, course by course,
From a firm base upraise a superstructure
That should endure through time. The fiery passion
Without distinction feeds on flowers and weeds:
But friendship, is select, considerate;
Needs concord of the Reason—I am watched!
[*Aloud.*] My lord of Winton, what do you here unbidden?

GARDINER.

I have stated, under pardon, that I hold
Despatches from his Holiness, wherein—

QUEEN.

Now I remember. But the Cardinal
Must be in presence. Bishops can backbite—welcome!

Enter CARDINAL.

My hand—no! no! it smells of blood! good Man,
Thou shalt not kiss it!

CARDINAL.

Daughter, calm yourself:
Your pleasure? Good my lord of Winton, speak:
Hath any evil chanced?

GARDINER [*aside*].

Missives from Rome;
Which touch your Eminence: she knows them not.

QUEEN.

Speak to your errand.

GARDINER.

May it please your Grace,
His Holiness, hereby, recalls the Legate;
And summons him to answer certain charges.

QUEEN.

What means the Pope? Are we not Queen? Forgets he
Our father? what!—recall the Cardinal,
Our cousin, counsellor; our leave unasked?

GARDINER.

The Cardinal Peyto shall attend your Grace,
Duly deputed with legantine powers.

QUEEN.

Who is this Peyto?—poor, Franciscan friar!—
Legate to us in place of royal Pole?
What is Pole's crime? the King he serves, and Us,
And People, as becomes an Englishman.
This Pope maltreats me. We have, in all things, laboured
To serve the Apostolick See. What dangers
Shall not this Pole's departure loose on England?

It is as though you took from a sick soul
Its best physician. Sir, he shall not go!

CARDINAL.

Some old spite rankles here. No Pope before
E'er dealt with trusted Legate thus. Some charge
Should be set forth, before recall. He knows not
A colourable fault, or he had named it.

QUEEN.

You shall not go—that's flat: nor Peyto come!
Without circumlocution tell them so.
Passion o' God! we'll not be trifled with!

CARDINAL.

My duty as a subject binds me here
To your Grace's will: but to his Holiness
Ecclesiastical subordination
Compels me to respect his interdict,
No more a legate.

QUEEN.

I will have no other.
Let's talk of something else. Lord Chancellor,
Touching this thing, remember we prohibit
The promulgation of the Papal Bull.
And now I do bethink me, let our Attorney
Enquire how far the Papal jurisdiction
Affects this realm. Methinks his Holiness

Hereafter more advisedly shall use us.

[*Exit Gardiner and Pole.*

No words upon't: retire!—O Margaret!
Sweet cousin, pity me! I am stung and scourged
With piled indignities. But—did not He—
My Saviour, meekly wear his thorny crown?
Why should I murmur?

MARGARET.

Madam, peruse his Word:
And it shall be thy comfort.

QUEEN.

Hush! you know not
All you dare think. Beneath the soul there sleep
The founts of a great Deep. Unseal them not—
Retire, fair girl: I long for silent thought.

[*Exit Margaret.*

[*She paces about: then stops before a veiled picture.*

To thee I turn; and not the Virgin Mother!
Forgive me, Heaven! thou canst not hear, O Philip,
My secret sighs: blind art thou to my weeping.
Yet I would kneel to thy insensate image,
And plead for pity. Never, never breathed
A wife more fond and faithful!

PHILIP [*entering.*]

Wherefore thus?

Rise from thy grovelling—I help thee not.

QUEEN.

Great God of heaven! look down and judge!

PHILIP.

How, Madam?
Do you impeach me? what is your complaint?

QUEEN.

Strengthen me, Thou, Almighty One! for I
Am very weak and miserable.

PHILIP.

Well:
Ere I go hence, you have besought this visit.
My horse is at the gate, pawing the air;
Impatient, like his master, to be gone.
My sail is on the sea: fair blows the wind:
Prithee, detain me not.

QUEEN.

If not a heart,
Have you no conscience?

PHILIP.

For my confessor.
Alphonse de Castro looks to that.

QUEEN.

Yet, Sir,
You countenance the foreign ribaldries
That offer shame to our pure manners.

PHILIP.

Prude!
Go to! We, Southrons, know the hottest fires
Smoulder beneath the mountain capped with snow.
Vesuvian lava sleeps in English bosoms,
Pure though they seem.

QUEEN.

No such retort you ventured
To my chaste maiden, Lady Magdalene;
Who smote you, as a Dacre knows to smite,
When with licentious arm you clasped her waist.

PHILIP.

I warrant you an Amazon! I' faith!
My error was to judge her by her name;
Deeming she might have earned it.

QUEEN.

This to me?

PHILIP.

Ay, most discreet of dames! and what's to thee
The carriage of your ladies? watch your own.

QUEEN.

I guard my ladies' honour as mine own.

PHILIP.

Then guard yourself.

QUEEN.

I stand in the open day,
A Queen, a loyal wife, before all eyes.
While you, Sir, rove at night, and give occasion
For losel scandal.

PHILIP.

Ha! indeed?—who dares
Whisper of Philip to his wife?

QUEEN.

No whisper!
See here—a ballad jest—"How the King likes
The baker's daughter in her russet gown
Better than Queen Mary without her crown"—

PHILIP.

'Sdeath!—I could stab the knave who—

QUEEN.

Stab this heart—
No more your pillow. I would gladly die!

PHILIP.

Talk you thus, Madam, with the Cardinal?

QUEEN.

O, Philip! I have never breathed my grief
Into another ear.

PHILIP.

With Pole your counsels
Are long—and private.

QUEEN.

Truest—holiest friend!

PHILIP.

In Spain we hold these pious—counsellors,
Ticklish companions in a lady's chamber.

QUEEN.

What is your drift, my lord?

PHILIP.

O nothing—nothing!
I am not jealous of you, my good Queen:
Though you to me have hazarded plain words.
Nay, lady, 'tis not that I trust the nature
Of any woman: but I trust experience.
A fast of forty years is wholesome practice!

QUEEN.

Begone! I must bear insult—I am helpless—
But you pollute my chaste mind with your gibes.
It is enough. I know my fate. Begone!

PHILIP [*after regarding her for some time, scornfully*].

For ever! [*He turns from her suddenly and goes.*

QUEEN.

[*alone*]. I submit to God's decree!
Was it for this my maiden liberty
Was yielded?—to be spurned—despised—and still

Bear on without redress? O grief! O shame!
[*She approaches the picture of Philip.*
Back, silken folds! that hide what was my joy,
And is my torture! Back!—See, I have rent you—
False, senseless idol, from thy tinselled frame.
I wrench thee forth—I look on thee no more!
And thus—and thus— [*She tears up the picture.*
I scatter thee from out
The desecrated temple of my heart!— [*A pause.*
My brain is hot—this swoln heart chokes my throat.
Yet am I better thus than self-deceived.
Die, wretched Queen! O die, dishonoured wife!
I pant for the cold blessing of the grave!

Scene II.

The Hall of Lambeth.

Procession of Prelates, followed by Nobles, &c.

PEMBROKE.

Well, Oxford, what says Cranmer? Will he bide
The penalty?

OXFORD.

Marking his vacillation,
I should say no: but ay, if well provoked.

PEMBROKE.

Here come they—Latymer, the lion, first.
Nor he, nor Ridley, quail: these look like martyrs.
The Queen! [*The Queen passes, attended.*

OXFORD.

Good God! how changed! Speak, Underhill—
You serve beside her Grace. Is not this sudden?

UNDERHILL.

My lord, she is dying.

OXFORD.

Why her surgeons say
She soon will have an heir.

UNDERHILL.

It is delusion.

PEMBROKE.

You, I believe, have served her since her child-
hood?

UNDERHILL.

I knew her when a girl: and not Jane Grey,
Whom she resembled, in her prime was fairer.
Then grief and passion had not stamped their
hoofs
On her high brow: and her acquirements
answered
The intellectual promise. Small of stature,
Her form was symmetry; her face well shaped,

With features feminine, perhaps too grave.
Her penetrating eye was to be feared,
Large, dark, intent. Her voice was musical;
Albeit at times too piercing; her rich hair
A golden brown, like sunshine on a chestnut:
Her full, red lip ripe ever to pettishness.

OXFORD.

This is not Mary now: alas! for pity!
The age she hath attained abates not beauty:
But grief drives like a ploughshare thro' its garden.

UNDERHILL.

I sketched the features of her prime! 'Tis thus
A woman should be shown to after time.

OXFORD.

A word with thee, good servant. Go to Hatfield:
And bid the princess, by the truth forearmed,
Be ready for the time—wary of Philip—
Above all, bold.

PEMBROKE.

Now, wait upon the Queen.

UNDERHILL.

We are in charge, my lords, that none shall pass
Save the Lord Chancellor and Cardinal.

PEMBROKE.

Peyto or Pole?

OXFORD.

This Peyto skulks in lanes,
Like a proved knave. The Queen denies to see him.

PEMBROKE.

The less of Rome, the better hope for England.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene III.

Gallery in Lambeth Palace.

Queen, Pole, Gardiner, Cranmer, Ridley, Latymer.

GARDINER.

We but await your Grace's word.

QUEEN [*after a pause.*]

The order
Of your procedure shall be grave; the manner
Stringent. I shall observe you, though in pain.
Should my mind wander, as 'tis apt to wander,
Recall attention without ceremony.

GARDINER.

This is no legal process; but a test

How far these obdurate men by frank confession
May clear their great offence, and spare the
fagot.
My lord of Canterbury we cite not
Till due authority from Rome shall issue.
Yet let me pray him seize this precious moment
For penitence. You, Latymer and Ridley,
Speak: have you ought to urge?

LATYMER.

I am too old
For controversy. I come here to die.

GARDINER.

With fagot at your beard this is vain glory.
Your learning, Sir, is lost. Well—turn in time;
And trust her Grace's mercy.

LATYMER.

Hope not that.
My prayer hath daily been—may the Queen turn!

GARDINER.

Oh obdurate! Hear this!

QUEEN.

Proceed with the others.

GARDINER.

What says the doctor Ridley? Thou art a man
Whose subtile wit would illustrate an Arius.

RIDLEY.

Say on. We change not. From your coming sentence
To God we make appeal. Our names, we trust,
Though not of your communion, shall be found
Writ in His book of life.

LATYMER.

I thank my God
Most heartily, that He hath thus preserved me
To glorify him by this kind of death.

GARDINER.

You see, my liege, what manner of men these be:—
Unmannerly, audacious. What need we more?

CARDINAL.

Let the Archbishop speak. It is his right.

GARDINER.

Speak, Thomas Cranmer.

CRANMER.

First my lords, I pray you,
To intercede for me, touching my sin
Of treason, which with penitence I own.
I am prepared to wrestle, as becomes
My sacred calling in my soul's defence.
Give me but patient hearing.

GARDINER.

That is granted.

CRANMER.

My lords, I doubt the law of your procedure.

GARDINER.

We act upon commission ; which for us
Is full acquittance. Hereticks despatched,
Their friends may sue the law, if so it pleaseth.

QUEEN.

You go too fast, my lord. I halt behind
Your expedite advance. Let law be law.
The secular arm is nerveless till conviction
At competent tribunals. See to this.

RIDLEY.

You keep us prisoners, deprived of service,
Or free communication with our fellows—

GARDINER.

Ay? who be they?

RIDLEY.

Our solitude, 'tis true,
Is little cheered by offices of kindness
From brother scholars : but the Poor, unlettered,
Have shown us sympathy.

LATYMER.

My soul, my soul
Finds in the prison house a holy cell
For meditation. 'Tis like a pitcher filled
To the brim, with scripture; which so mightily

Endows the spirit, that all infirmities
Of flesh fall from me. I am strong through faith.

CARDINAL.

My lord of Canterbury, when you dispute,
Observe, the parliament prohibits use
Of all suspect translations of the Bible;
And your own book upon the Sacraments.
You must rely on writings orthodox.
The Fathers such; and Scripture, as the Church
Expounds.

CRANMER.

In chains I fight not. I deny
The truth of your expounding.

GARDINER.

Hear, my liege!
He doth deny the truth!

CARDINAL.

Wrest not his words.
What would you say, Archbishop?

CRANMER.

I entreat
License to utter freely all my thought.
'Tis true her Grace mislikes me, and with cause;—
That Reformation is her royal province;—
Yet speak I must in duty to my God.

LATYMER.

Why speak you not more roundly? they have scourged
Our brethren with their rods; burned them with fagots;
Famished and drowned; ripped up their buried bodies,
And flung to dogs. 'Tis true—these are not lies.—
Eyes have beheld—your consciences bear witness!
The blood of Abel crieth unto God—
And at your hands shall be required! Great Queen,
I supplicate you, by a mother's love,
Have pity on your children, spare your people!

QUEEN.

Fearful old man! why thus adjur'st thou me?

CRANMER.

Be temperate, Latymer: this will not serve.

LATYMER.

Not serve—will it avenge?

QUEEN.

Intemperate man!
I press not thee more than I would endure.
If right, you are a martyr, worthy heaven:
If wrong, deserve no pity.

CARDINAL.

Had ye been

Endowed with judgment equal to your courage,
Ye had not missed the mark of genuine greatness.
That little which ye lack bewrays your life.

RIDLEY.

We enter life as on a battle field
Where principle must be asserted bravely.
This shakes us not—that God with us should deal
As with his chosen Captains in old time:
Nor yet repine we that our mortal state
Partakes the customed penalties of man.

GARDINER.

You waste the time.

LATYMER.

He speaks as the time needs!—
The Truth of God ye hide within a cave,
Sealed with a seal, and guarded by a guard:
But that which died shall live; and, shining wide
On all the white-robed synod of the Saints,
Keep, in the face of Christendom restored,
Its joyful Passover! Lords, we defy you!
What should we shrink from who look back on Him—
Our Master—whose great sacrifice began
When time was as an infant, pure and tearful,
And still bleeds on through every martyr's wound?
He, massacred with Abel; tempest-tost

With Noah; bound upon the pile with Isaak;
A miracle of patience as in Job;
Betrayed with Joseph; and like Daniel cast
Amid the lions—No! we will not shrink!

GARDINER.

I' faith you speak bold words. Can you do boldly?

RIDLEY.

There have been men of fearless mind, who dared
All, for their Country. One—the Roman—leaped
Alive into his grave, earth's yawning chasm.
Shall then a Christian falter in his faith?—
His faith in Him who laid heaven's crown aside
To win immortal palms for those He loved?

GARDINER.

Palms—palms? for such as you? Presumptuous
fools!
Who scarce can boast the name of Church.

RIDLEY.

Our Church
Is as the grape of Ephraim; better worth
Than Abiezer's vintage. In her pale
All wholesome comfort, honest aids are centered.
The pleasures she affords are of the soul,
Inward, yet shared by all; perdurable.
She spreads no peacock feathers in the sun
To lure the eye; nor scatters on the air
Sweet odours, to entrap the sense. All blessing

She knows included in the Word of God!
What are the joys of sense to joys like hers,
That grow for ever?—

CARDINAL.

This is very grievous!
Madam, so please you, these be heated men,
Who may not be convinced, and will not bend.
With Cranmer I would crave some separate speech.

[*Exeunt Ridley and Latymer attended.*

Cranmer, my friend, you much mistake, believe me,
The interest of the Church. The Church is one,
And indivisible; though you have split
Her walls, seceding. You should have trained with care,
Not rent, the wild shoots of the immortal tree.
If sand be mixed with gold, men purge the dross,
But change not gold for lead. Work with us, Cranmer!
Say you that things need mending? You but say
What pious men within our pale say also,
Albeit that task they trust not to base hands.
In her own breast the Church retains the cure
Of ills that vex her. Men in conference met,
Learned and saintly monitors, take counsel;
Whereby all points of difference are settled.

Ay, men must work in concert, and the few
Yield to the many, or we'll see no end.

CRANMER.

Your words show more the statesman than the churchman.
'Tis not the voice of Rome.

CARDINAL.

In that you err.
The amplitude of Rome hath space reserved
Where Freedom may indulge her dreams. How else
Our Carmelites, Dominicans, Franciscans?
We wink; they kneel: enough—the Church stands firm.
—I can no more. We must not lose this man.
Gardiner, strive thou.

GARDINER.

Commit to me his keeping,
And I will strive—

CRANMER.

To thee? Have mercy, Christ!
My vineyard is too near the house of Ahab.

GARDINER [*aside*].

Ha! Philip's word!

CRANMER.

O Queen! my heart is full.
And I could prophesy, but I refrain.

The bitter cup is brimming: it is enough—
We both must drain our portion. Are you happy?
See what has come of my prosperity!
Prosperity? alas! what part hast thou
In real joys—cankered prosperity?
—The conquest of our passions is true joy.
Content is joy: and there's a spiritual joy
In converse with our God; capacity
For learning and high art; and these used rightly
In aid of fellow men, and for God's glory!
But there's a joy beyond; transcendent, holy;
The joy when saints take up their Master's cross—
The joy of pain that testifies of faith—
Shining abroad, significant of grace,
And coming glory! such as Peter found
Upon his cross—Stephen beneath the stones—
Paul in his cavern—Lawrence o'er the flames!
—I have wandered—pardon me!

CARDINAL.

We stayed to teach:
And have been taught. Thanks for your sermon, Cranmer!
The Queen grows pale: be quick in your retiring.
Lean on my arm, my liege. Cranmer, adieu!
We meet again. Would that thy faith were true!

[*Exeunt severally.*

Scene IV.

Queen's Closet, Whitehall.

Queen *and* Cardinal.

CARDINAL.

The silent moth gnaws not more fatally
Tissue of gold, than sadness gnaws our heart.
Let us apply the moral.

QUEEN.

Cousin, why blame
Me, not my fate?

CARDINAL.

Fate?—In your body dwells there
An evil spirit, that your life must be
A purgatory? Think you God directs
'Gainst you alone his thunders? arms 'gainst you
His judgments? O what torture like self-torture!
See yourself as I see you, heavy-browed,
With troubled eye, and countenance aghast—

QUEEN.

God made me weak and fallible.

CARDINAL.

Poor Soul!
Be to yourself more charitable. Think

That One there is who answers for your faults,
And multiplies your merits.

QUEEN.

Hope rests there:
Or I were mad.

CARDINAL.

All men are born to suffer.
What are the consolations of the Scripture,
The fruit of exhortation and of prayer,
If now you quail? No, you shall quail no more.

QUEEN.

My web of life was woven with the nettle:
My very triumphs were bedewed with tears.
What now is left?

CARDINAL.

Religion. As the sunbow
Shines in the showery gloom, and makes the cloud
A shape of glory, in thy path she stands
A herald of high promise. Blessed emblem!
Religion bids thee hope! This gloomy life
Must be amended; we must draw thee hence.

QUEEN.

Thanks be to God! time works while we grieve on.
Deprive not sorrow of the shade she needs;
The sad quiescence of desponding thought.
Job also raised his voice, and wailed aloud,

And so was comforted. Remember, also,
In weeping I can pray: should I not?

CARDINAL.

Yea.
Pray with thanksgiving: 'tis the sum of duty!

QUEEN.

Whene'er I turn my thoughts to God, one image
Stands between me and heaven. Instead of prayer
A sigh for Philip trembles on my lip.

CARDINAL.

To pine thus for the absent, as men mourn
The dead, is sinful.

QUEEN.

Speak no more of him.
Thoughts holier be my guide. You pity one
Who twines her heart to the decaying creature,
Yet may earn heaven. All earthly vows are light
As winds; faithless as ice. I raise my eyes:
There find I love enduring—ever loyal!
Ay, loyal; for the Saviour, through our flesh,
Hath bound himself to man's community;
And with immortal garlands, without thorns,
Shall crown his chosen.

CARDINAL.

Hear me, Queen of England!
Thus I preach comfort to thee. Live for thy People!

Make England happy! It is a noble thing
To stablish thrones on bounty; reign through love:
To make the spacious heart of man our kingdom.
O'er such a Prince the hand of God shakes forth
Blessings like rain on the green lap of Spring.
For him no stabber lurks in palace courts:
His march is tranquil in the front of battle:
Good luck attends his counsels. Prosperous
At home, and reverenced in lands remote,
All eyes wake for him, and all tongues pray for him:
His life shall be a blessing to his people;
And his just memory their rightful dower.

QUEEN.

But how make good the portraiture? alas!
We cannot pace the avenue to glory,
Until with blood its sacred palms are sprinkled.
Our churches were baptized with martyrs' gore,
Which holocausts must purge!

CARDINAL.

I spake not, daughter,
Of glory: I besought thee to be good.
The chief of greatness is surpassing goodness:
And that outsoars the ken of mortal eyes;
Hidden with God. Yet I would have thee glorious:
Radiant with all heroic qualities;

Magnanimously bent on great designs;
Profuse in liberality; sedate
Even in devotion; scrupulously just;—
All this hath Mary been: why not so still?

QUEEN.

O Reginald! thou guiding, this might be.
To thy pure hands I would confide the staff
Now feebly held by the apostate Cranmer.

CARDINAL.

To speak of him I sought you.

QUEEN.

First decide:
Will you accept this charge?

CARDINAL.

And Winton curse
The hand that doth supplant him?

QUEEN.

He deserves
Promotion: but not thus—

CARDINAL [*musing*].

He who hath stood
Upon the first step of the Papal throne,
And vacant left the Vatican, may look
With eye undazzled on the chair of Lambeth.

QUEEN.

The Church requires your service: you must yield it.

CARDINAL.

I answer to her call, and yours. A wrong
It were to both if Stephen Gardiner made
The crozier but a bloody battle-axe.
You must spare Cranmer. Hear me. He hath been
Your mother's foe—a false friend to her rival:
Therefore 'tis great to spare. But in the main,
Though weak, he is good; ardent in search of truth,
Though apt to wander; generous when not fearful;
Clear-sighted, where self-interest blinds him not.
Such men are dangerous, if desperate:
We must not make him so—for such make martyrs;
And martyrdoms make error popular.

QUEEN.

I wish not for his death.

CARDINAL.

But Gardiner wills it:
Ay, and will have it, if you be not watchful.
Strange things are rumoured of the Council's doings
While you lay sick.

QUEEN.

What can I do?

CARDINAL.

No evil,

That good may follow. Openly remove
The heretick prelate by prerogative;
And, though most irksome, I will bear his burthen.

QUEEN.

I have long thought it strange that you refused
The greater honour though the heavier burthen:
The proffered crown of Rome.

CARDINAL [*after much agitation*].

Look not alarmed—

[*A pause.*

You touch the mind's immedicable wound.—
O God! that I had died before I knew thee!—
Pardon me—pardon me!

QUEEN.

We both need pardon.
Let us forget the past. God strengthen us!

CARDINAL.

Fear not. Henceforth we gaze upon each other,
As the two Cherubim upon the Ark;
The living God between!

QUEEN.

Then take my hand.
—It will be colder soon. May God be with you!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene V.

Oxford, interior of a Prison.

Cranmer, Ridley, Latymer.

RIDLEY.

We stand upon the confines of two worlds;
Which are as kingdoms in hostility.
Here every passion, here all woes are banded;
And from the throne of death an Anarch rules.
There infinite peace, beneath the shield of faith;
Angelick knowledge; immortality!
At length we stoop o'er the dividing ridge,
After sore labour. Fear not to descend.
Our grievous perils past, all sorrows o'er,
The kingdom of our God unfolds! Hosanna!

LATYMER.

Thank God that I have lived to see this day,
And bless him from the midst of purging fires!
Brother, through God's grace, we this day shall kindle,
Throughout this English land, a light whereby
True Faith shall shine for ever.

RIDLEY.

Praise to Him,
Our Strength alone!—Thou art reserved, dear Cranmer—

God give our Captain courage for the fight!

CRANMER.

My soul is sad. I need your dying prayers.
Too prosperous, too dainty in my ways,
I have been, for this reverse. The coming doom
Shakes me, as shames a soldier of the cross.

RIDLEY.

Kneel, and pour forth thy fainting spirit in prayer,
When we go forth. Think not of what we suffer:
But gaze upon the vision of our glory,
Till thou shalt long to share it.

CRANMER.

Not as thine
Is my poor heart; but sluggish as my blood
Creeps my slow mind. God shapes us wonderfully!
We seem both formed alike; yet that free spirit
Which sparkles in thine eyes looks dull from mine.
Are we indeed slaves of our elements?

RIDLEY.

In truth the moral and the physical
Are wondrously compacted: God's good purpose
Pervading all.

LATYMER.

Come, brother; it is time
To wean our thoughts from Earth. To prayer—
to prayer!

So shall our psalms rise on our flames to Heaven!
Dear Cranmer take our last embrace. Be firm,
And faithful to the end!

[*Exeunt Ridley and Latymer.*

CRANMER [*alone*].

Incarnate Spirits
Of martyrdom! ye will ascend the pile
As 'twere Elijah's chariot :—this poor heart,
The while with palpitating terrors torn.
O cease, ye earthly tremours! Faith, support me!
Surely I have not called on God aright?
—Alas! alas! that, knowing well my fault,
I have not strength to mend it—I will pray!—

[*He retires to a side oriel, kneels, rises, looks from the window.*

Enter GARDINER, *who watches unobserved.*

CRANMER.

O God! was it in kindness or despite
They placed me here? My heart was not prepared
To quit, without a pang, this fair, fair world.
Look on that breadth of woodland; breezy hills;
And waters that wind through, like placid
thoughts.
Here could I live a hermit, praising God:
Forgetful of all cares;—the carnal pomps

Of Lambeth;—court cabals. Go forth, my soul—
And commune with the things thou lov'dst in
youth.
Oh! is it not a goodly thing to hold
Discourse with the great forest, face to face;
Near murmuring waters, with free-warbling birds,
And throng of insect life that veils the porch
Of the great Temple? Then our souls converse
With that Intelligence diffused through all!—
Who thinks of cunning stops, metals or woods,
Or the trained finger, when the organ's breath
Blows perfect music through capacious domes?—
Our spirit commingles with the spirit of sound,
Participant of all its harmonies.
Thus penetrates the soul all that is good
And beautiful in Nature: drawing from all
The flavour and the aliment of joy.
How great his goodness, sharing all perfections
Among his creatures:—wisdom that proportions
Each to his want! O! love Him—He is thine—
And thou art His! His arms surround—His grace
Protects—His liberalities enrich thee!—

[*Loud shouting outside.*

I wake—O miserable man!—behold!
Does God indeed protect thee? Hark those yells—
Great God! that fearful death! the most abhorred!

[*He beats the ground.*

Hide me, cold stones! thou gelid Earth, ope for me!
[*Starts up again.*
I must look on it—ha! it drags me forward
[*A sudden glare.*
With a wild fascination—see—they gather
Around—a ring of fiends!—O women! women!
What brings ye there?—is this a sight? I'm
blasted! [*He reels back.*
The smoke—breaks off—the flames—O Latymer!
I am very faint—too much!—I cannot bear it.

GARDINER.

Nor need you, master Cranmer. In your ear;
One little word. [*Whispers.*

CRANMER.

Avoid thee, Satan!

GARDINER.

Pshaw!
You are to blame. Hard words shall not avail
you.
But I forgive. You weep away your brains.

CRANMER.

Gardiner, I am ashamed that you should see
A Christian thus.

GARDINER.

Tut, man! the bravest soldier
Would shake to see a brother roast alive:

Especially, if waiting for his turn.
Why, what a fool are you to take your turn!
You will not bear it. You being head of all
These hereticks, ay you they'll torture slowly.
Sick fancy shudders to behold thee—blackening
And withering mid the coals—and hear thy shrieks—
And all so soon!

CRANMER.

When, when?—

GARDINER.

Perhaps—to morrow

CRANMER.

I cannot bear it. I'll sign—anything!

GARDINER.

Then this—go to! Your hand shakes: take more time.
Why men will say—No matter what they say,
Now it is done.

CRANMER.

And am I safe?

GARDINER.

'Tis likely

CRANMER.

Is it not certain?

GARDINER.

Only probable.

But I shall be your friend. Trust not in Pole!

CRANMER.

Palter not with me. Why not trust in Pole?
I have ever found him gentle.

GARDINER.

Men are mortal.

CRANMER.

Pole's in good health—

GARDINER.

Yet prophecies go round
That he stands foremost on death's calendar.

CRANMER.

He shall outlive us both.

GARDINER.

I think not so.
Enough—If you uphold what's here subscribed,
You may be saved.

CRANMER.

Yet lost eternally!

GARDINER.

Possibly both ways, if you so speak to others.
We shall see—we shall see! God keep you, Dr.
Cranmer! [*Exit.*

CRANMER.

Oh madman! recreant! I am lost for ever!

[*Scene closes.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Queen's Closet, Whitehall.

Enter QUEEN *and* CARDINAL.

CARDINAL.

I TELL you this is wrong; your course is wicked.
Ay, wicked—I must speak. O Mary! shrink not.
This duty, trust me, is an agony.

QUEEN.

Go on, my lord.

CARDINAL.

Rogers died first: what then?
Keener Fanaticism from his ashes
Sprang up, a new-born Phœnix. Hooper, Ridley,
The venerable Latymer; now Cranmer—
You kindle fires to torture dying men:
These fires are lighting living hearts.

QUEEN.

What mean you?
Think you I love to kill? It is—It is—
A terrible duty! Pole, I cannot sleep:
Yet dreams are not more hideous than my thoughts.

CARDINAL.

Sometimes I hope you know not what fiends do,
Armed with your name.

QUEEN.

I know the men you named
Died, obstinate in crime.

CARDINAL.

The men I named!
The poor, by thousands, perish in your flames!

QUEEN.

The poor! the ignorant! I slay not these.

CARDINAL.

Yet these die daily.

QUEEN.

Would that I were dead!
The faculty of power slips from my grasp:
And I remain the servile tool of wrong.
Would I were dead!—It will soon be—What means this?

Enter GARDINER.

My lord of Winton. Does the Council doom
Our people without warrant from ourself?

GARDINER.

None but the obdurate in heresy.
For this we have our warrant: and no less
Will satisfy the Church. To stem the course
Of justice, Madam, trust me, shall endanger
Your precious soul:—nor would it now avail.
The Holy See in this hath masterdom.

QUEEN.

Mean you to menace?

GARDINER.

God forbid! But one
Sits on the Roman throne who knows its rights.

QUEEN.

Rights?

GARDINER.

Interdict and excommunication.

CARDINAL.

Trust me, my lord, the people will not bear
These dire severities.

GARDINER.

We'll look to that.
The people?—ever preaching of the people!

My lord, if they but budge, we'll ride them down.

CARDINAL.

I shame to hear you.

GARDINER.

Wherefore?

CARDINAL.

They are men!
What fills your treasury? The people's hands;
Which labour at the loom, the plough, the helm.
What nerves your power? The thews of common men.
Ye can transmute the peasant's blood to gold:
Refine his sweat to silken sheen and gems.
What then to you is basis of all gain?
The poor serf's heart, who smiles amid his labours,
And kisses every hand that spreads his dole;—
Yet, roused by wrong, in blindness of his strength,
Can pull the pillars of your temples down
In righteous ruin.

QUEEN.

Pole, thou speakest well.

GARDINER.

Under your leave, my liege, his Eminence
Speaks scholarly, not practically, well.
Wise sayings are the playthings of the wise.

As abstract propositions, in their closets,
Men sport with maxims which, in act, would peril
Their heads, and shake down kingdoms.

QUEEN.

Let this cease.
You named but now the Archbishop. He is safe
In recantation.

GARDINER.

He retracts the same.

CARDINAL.

Not so. Renewed persuasion binds him faster.

GARDINER.

I say the recreant shall retract once more,
When urged by hope, not fear.

CARDINAL.

A weak, good man.

GARDINER.

'Twere well to test this instability.
Therefore, upon the ground of his backsliding,
He shall be thoroughly probed.

QUEEN.

No torture, Sir!

GARDINER.

None—surely none—save torture of the mind.

CARDINAL.

Your meaning?

GARDINER.

Simply thus. He hath relapsed:
And therefore merits death. With due permission,
I purpose to prepare him for the stake:
The fear whereof will madden him. We, then,
May hint—that if he shall profess repentance,
From the high pulpit of Saint Mary's church,
The doom he hath incurred may be remitted.
Their leader's palinode shall scandalize
His faction sorely. What says my lord to this?

CARDINAL.

You study the sage Florentine. Your scheme
Is worthy Macchiavelli, and his "Tyrant."

GARDINER.

The scholar will break out! You better suit
The cloister than the court. Time presses, Madam.

CARDINAL.

Madam, you speak not. Then 'tis time I go.

QUEEN.

Desert me not.

CARDINAL.

Desert not thou thyself.
I have once spoken plainly—twice to speak
Is once too often, when we speak in vain.

[*Exit Cardinal.*

GARDINER.

Now think, and act, as shall become a Queen;
Enervated no more by this man's folly!

QUEEN.

Presume not thou to slur the Cardinal.

GARDINER.

My liege, the time hath come when duty forces
Words from my lips which may affect my life.
Slay me, but hear me first: hear the King's voice—
The word a husband speaks; who will renounce you,
(In this I speak commissioned) if unheeded:
The word the Church, through me, her minister,
Pronounces; which can excommunicate
(I speak commissioned) all who disobey:
The word our venerable law declares,
Saying, the Sovereign who abandons duty
(I speak commissioned still) forfeits the rights
Accorded to her by her subjects' oaths;
Then when her oath gave pledge reciprocal.
[*He kneels.*
You are moved! O blame me not or strike me dead—
The death were welcome that might win you back
To the right path, whence if you now depart
You perish.

QUEEN [*much agitated*].

I will do what you judge best.

GARDINER.

Nay what the Council judge—then you are safe.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Hatfield House.

Enter ELIZABETH, WINCHESTER, PEMBROKE, OXFORD.

ELIZABETH.

A CURSE is on this kingdom! Each new day
Comes with the stamp of blood upon its forehead.
And though pale faces lurk 'neath smiling masks,
The hot heart palpitates for retribution.
My sister's miseries are manifest:
Yet still the royal monster who deserts her
Rules through his myrmidons. In vain doth Pole
His nobler counsels urge.

WINCHESTER.

Our hope lay there—
In our great enemy—'tis marvellous

How little Pole's commanding mind and will
Avail this day for England.

OXFORD.

He is cramped.
Within the jealous precinct of a court
Large energies like his lack room to move.
Pole cannot act with others. Men like him
Bear sway alone; or lie like stranded ship,
That hears the clarion of the seaward wind,
And waves no pennon.

ELIZABETH.

His ambition dead,
(For he has touched the summit and foregone it)
He fights with the left hand; and from his work
His heart is absent.

WINCHESTER.

Also his body fails him.

ELIZABETH.

The silver voice of Fakenham pleads in vain.
Philip commands; Bonner inveighs; at hand
Is wily Gardiner's whisper. Shal we wonder
If thus assailed, sapped, stung, her sick heart
yields?

PEMBROKE.

We wonder not; but—let the word be spoken—
Shall we submit?

WINCHESTER.

Ridley and Latymer
Have perished: Cranmer, ere another day,
Dies too. Speak Madam! Shall the plague be stayed?

ELIZABETH.

I scarcely understand your aim, my lords:—
Perhaps I misconceive. What would you have?

PEMBROKE.

Elizabeth for Queen!

OXFORD.

You go too far.
I would to God her Highness ruled through law—
Not in despite of law. The Queen's distraught.
I claimed my right, an audience, hoping little,
Yet strenuous. Alas! what found I there?
Eyes wandering, thoughts perplexed, a broken voice—
The tower of mind down toppling to its earth!
She is half dead—

WINCHESTER.

Without sign manual
No convict dies.

OXFORD.

What knows she what she signs?
Parchments throng round—time presses—Gardiner frets—

With aching brain she strives to read; then sighs,
And wipes her eyes; and signs. God pardon her!
Her faculties are torpid. She will lie
Speechless as one that's dead: then wake with cries,
Her temples swollen with inward pain, teeth gnashing,
Her pale lips flecked with foam.

WINCHESTER.

God pity her!

OXFORD.

She dreamed to be the giver of new life:
But breeds disease, whose issue must be death.

WINCHESTER.

Is not this persecution a plain fact?

OXFORD.

Oh those incarnate devils, Gardiner and Bonner!
Flesh bred in murder! Blame those fiends, not her.
And blame your parliament with purse agape
For Noaille's gold; and ears for Renard's guile!
I say the Queen's distraught; she cannot govern—
A regency cures that.

PEMBROKE.

I love straight ways:
Bye paths mislead. Had Richmond grasped at Bosworth

Less than a crown, Richard had won the day.

ELIZABETH.

My lords, I pray you cease. I have ever found
The Queen exceeding kind. She spared me once;
When foes maligned me. I will not supplant her:—
Nor, were I so disposed, doth the time suit.
That time too swiftly comes;—but heralded
By death. Be patient.

WINCHESTER.

Cranmer loved your Mother.

ELIZABETH.

Where was his aid in her extremity?
Weak pilot, veering with each shift of wind!
Think you he will recant again?

OXFORD.

Not now.

ELIZABETH.

Then is he doomed. Christ succour his frail flesh!
How can I save a self-abandoned man?
No man is safe. All are hemmed in by spies.
Men watch while we talk here. Farewell, my lords.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III.

Oxford, the Queen's Chamber.

Enter, to her, Gardiner.

QUEEN.

Why stand'st thou gasping thus?

GARDINER.

Scarce can I speak.
I am well nigh choked with anger and amaze.
This smooth, fair-spoken, lying, cringing Cranmer
Hath turned upon us, like a boar at bay!
Ay, of a truth, he bared his tusks on us,
In such a sort, these gray hairs stood on end.

QUEEN.

Dares he to tempt us—peril his soul's safety—
Even in the doomster's grasp?

GARDINER.

Let me take breath!
Heart-sick and brain-sick am I—Miscreant! traitor!—
We led the arch heretick to Mary's church;
Trusting that there he would abjure his sin;
And so improve short respite to full pardon.

The "nunc dimittis" sung, we let him mount
The step beneath the pulpit; where he knelt,
And wept so piteously, that many, trust me,
Shed tears in sympathy; specially those
Who felt most hopeful in his late conversion.
But scarce had Doctor Cole his worthy sermon
Concluded, in the which he set forth stoutly
The heresies of this blind man; expounding
How men are tempted, not beyond endurance;
And that his hope, even like the penitent thief
Might mount to Paradise; with many more
Like comfortable charges—this, concluded,
Cranmer arose, with tearful eyes to heaven.
Our hopes stood tiptoe: but, this mumming ended,
Did he profess the truth? Not so!—Quoth he,
"The time hath passed that I should more dissemble."
And then he swore his conscience pricked him most
For his feigned recantation, to save life:
And that the hand which signed should burn the first.
Then did he ban the Pope:—We stood aghast!

QUEEN.

Now, by the God that made me!—but, go on.

GARDINER.

We bade him be a Christian, and submit.
But momently he grew more contumacious:
Until, our patience gone, we packed him off
Unto the stocks.

QUEEN.

Inveigh against the Pope?
Revile our holy Church?—incite the People?—

GARDINER.

We wait your pleasure.

QUEEN.

Let him die the death!

GARDINER.

Suspense is torture. He must die! The state—
God's holy Church—your oath to both demand it.

QUEEN.

Spurned as a rabid dog—shunned as a leper—
Let his foul ashes scatter on the wind!
So be the violated Faith avenged:
Away! away! I pant for thy return!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.

A Street in Oxford.

Enter WINCHESTER, OXFORD, *and* PEMBROKE.

PEMBROKE.

THE Princess fails us : let us try the People,
Or he is lost.

WINCHESTER.

Consistency, forsooth !
Stand up to death !—all for a name—a shadow !
A martyr truly ! Better live a saint !
To die untimely shall not profit him,
Nor his disciples. Let him live; that so
Hereafter he may preach.

OXFORD.

What matters it—
Or soon or late? Our mission here is closed,
Duty fulfilled: and when this world fades from us
The better dawns. Scandal too much hath fallen
Upon the Church by his backsliding once.
Be firm, O Cranmer, to the end !

WINCHESTER.

I grant you,

The trouble of the time requires calm courses.

PEMBROKE.

Calm courses! Have I challenged on his path
That bear, Northumberland, to quail at curs?

WINCHESTER.

You knew your man, and weighed the times: that bear
Fell in your pit—sorely we smote him in it—
Marry I spared not!

OXFORD.

I had no part therein.
I scorned the vermin, and withheld from Court.
But to the matter. Count not on the people:
'Tis manifest they side with the old Church.
To strike with half a weapon—charge unbacked—
Were but scant wisdom.

WINCHESTER.

We must bide our time.

PEMBROKE.

Farewell, my lords!—So be it!—Sink, good sword
In Isis fathoms five—I need you not!

[*Exit, flinging away his sword.*

WINCHESTER.

We have chafed our noble friend a whit too sharply.

OXFORD.

Give the hot horse the rein—he'll stop when
breathless.
But what avails complaint. 'Tis time we part.

WINCHESTER.

Oxford, farewell! Heaven bless thy noble heart.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V.

Oxford. A Gallery.

QUEEN, *alone.*

QUEEN.

WHY comes not Gardiner?—this is horrible.
He tempted me, he terrified, he goaded;—
The homicide I fiated is doing—
And like the victim I stand shivering here,
In the mind's ague. Hark! was not that a cry?
What do I watch?—Inexorable minutes,
How swift ye speed!—too late—too late to save!
O mad precipitation of my will!
Even while I speak, the future grows the past!

[*Shouting heard.*

The shout of thousands, from the scene of death
Murmuring hoarsely—what is doing now?

Enter GARDINER [*staggering feebly*].

You come at last—I have waited long— speak—
speak!
Hush—that dread sound again! My temples burn
Hot as the martyr's pile. 'Tis doing—Bishop!
The deed you longed for—why not look on it
With your red, hungry eyes? The man you hate
Even now consumes in his great agony.
O Cranmer! See him, as I see him now—
His arms flung forth, thus—thus: the tongues
of flame
Eating into him like Megæra's vipers!
The agony of hell is in that cry!
It hath gone up before the Son of God
Appealing; ay—and we must answer it.
Well may you tremble, prelate! Ho! some light!
A preternatural shadow falls upon us.
I shall grow mad—why speak you not, pale
wretch?

GARDINER.

Pardon! My voice sticks in my throat. In truth
I am very feeble—sick almost to death.

QUEEN.

Light! light! what means this darkness? Hark! the voice
Of God in thunder! who hath seen before
A cloud like that o'ercast the evening sky?
Black as a pall—it grows—it hovers o'er us—
A demon's wing, dun with the soot of hell!
Come hither—nay, you shall come—mark yon glare!
It is not lightning—it abides: not lightning,
It grows—look on it—priest of peace! look on it!
Know you what that betides? I charge you, speak.

GARDINER.

I can endure no more! [*He rushes out.*

Enter FAKENHAM.

QUEEN.

Welcome, good Fakenham!
Speak, I conjure you! let me hear some voice!

FAKENHAM.

What can I say?—Thought sickens—

QUEEN.

While you pause
Fancy is busy—anything but silence!
I am nerved to hear the worst.

FAKENHAM.

What shall I say?
His death—that white-haired man—had graced a martyr?

QUEEN.

What did he do—what say?

FAKENHAM.

He never shrank
From torment—nay, ere the flame reached his body,
He stretched his hand forth to it, and there held it—
A black and shrivel'd shape—pah! I am sick!—
Saying, "Weak member! thou hast wrought my sin;
Perish thou first!"

QUEEN.

I think my senses fail:
What more—what more?

FAKENHAM.

He never breathed a groan;
But bowed his head amid the flames and died.

QUEEN.

A martyr! ha! ha! martyr—said you not?

FAKENHAM.

His death became the saints of better days.

Enter MARGARET DOUGLAS.

MARGARET.

O my sweet mistress!

QUEEN.

What new stroke of horror
Falls on us now?

MARGARET.

Scarce had my lord of Winton
Reached his own house, where friends had come to feast,
Sudden, as though by lightning, he fell dead.

QUEEN.

Support me, I am giddy!

FAKENHAM.

Hold her up—
Dead! Gardiner dead! He hath been sick of late.
Yet it is strange. Watch our sad mistress well.
[*Exeunt Queen and Margaret.*
Ay—strange—both die: both—victim, and oppressor—
At the same moment die: and die unshriven.
Be masses sung!—let prayer unceasingly
Rise to the throne of God!—Mediate, good Saints!
Two grievous sinners sleep: may both awake
To mercy! Which needs most?—I am sore disturbed. [*Exit.*

Scene VI.

Richmond Place, Queen's Chamber.

Queen *asleep on a couch, with* Margaret Douglas *near her.* *Enter* Cardinal *and* Oxford.

CARDINAL.

I fear I task your friendly aid, my lord;
This fever eats into my bones: I move
Feebly and painfully.

OXFORD.

Your Eminence
Is not so stricken as our mistress yonder.
I do begin to fear her end is nigh.

CARDINAL.

Our birth is the beginning of our dying!
It matters little when the end shall be.

OXFORD.

Much to our woful country. Heaven avert it!

CARDINAL.

To suit one creature, universal laws
Are not revoked. Swift be thy homeward voyage,
O Mary, to the haven of thy rest!
The providential current, followed out,
Will lead thee onward to the pleasant sea;

From cataract and rock devolving smoothly
To the great symbol of eternity;
Which, seeming to dispart, links all together.

OXFORD.

Think you, my lord, King Philip will come back?

CARDINAL.

I fear me not.

OXFORD.

Nor guess a cause?

CARDINAL.

'Tis clear
He loves her not. Alas! he knows her not,
Thus thralled, thus masked, in premature decay,
Sprung from unworthy slight, care, grief, remorse.

OXFORD.

He may be jealous.

CARDINAL.

No! he does not love!

OXFORD.

His natural condition is distrust:
His ear needs but some venemous tongue to sting it,
And he shall be as dangerous as the abyss,
Whose smoke makes dark the sun!

CARDINAL.

Alas! alas!

Behold the end. Here lies a great heart blasted!

[*He kneels at the couch and kisses the Queen's hand.*

QUEEN.

The Cardinal—O joy!—How sweet to waken
Toward a loved face with a smile! Whence come you?
Why look you sad?

CARDINAL.

I came to lighten sorrow.

QUEEN.

Is the King well?

CARDINAL.

The King is well, but comes not.

QUEEN.

Oh me! when I look back on what I have been;
The strange vicissitudes that marked my way;
I shudder for the future. I have been
As one who saw some vision in the air
Of elemental beauty, which, when grasped at,
Vanished: and left instead a grinning devil.
Too late I find how far from good I've wandered.
Oh! never may you feel the agony
Which weighs a heart down that hath earned despair.
You stare at me as one of sense deprived,

Or a sleep-walker crouching o'er a gulf.
I am no maniac, Pole, but very wretched.

CARDINAL.

Why will you judge the worst? prognosticate
Nought but disaster? This is no regal spirit!
It is to be a dastard to complain.

QUEEN.

There was a time—O Reginald! our youth
Was not bound down by frosty forms: pray with me!
Pray for me!—pray for hope!

CARDINAL.

There was a time
When all your thoughts were to this heart laid open:
And then to comfort your's was joy to mine.
Methought God gave you, as I prayed for you—
Now graver state, stern duties interpose;
And reverence chains down favour.

QUEEN.

God! thou knowest
What, under better guidance, I had been.
Marvels perplex; torments, despised while suffered,
Master the spirit; blind forebodings mock us:
And, though the eye marks not, the inner soul,

Trembling, responds to outward influences.
Therefore I deem this shadow on my mind
The skirts of that dark pall which swathes my fortunes.

CARDINAL.

This from a Christian?

Enter LORD WENTWORTH, *Governor of Calais.*

QUEEN.

Hold! if I read aright
A face of woe, this justifies my fear,
Why come you, Wentworth, from your precious charge?

WENTWORTH.

Woe's me! my charge is lost. Calais hath yielded.

QUEEN.

What man—art mad? unsay thy tidings, traitor!
Calais, the brightest gem of Harry's crown!
Our badge on France's cap—our sallyport
To his rich manors! O dishonoured Queen!
Talk not to me of patience—speak of vengeance,
Or I shall madden.

WENTWORTH.

Hear a little further.
The King hath triumphed nobly at Saint Quentin.
The Spanish infantry there pushed the French

From a fair field; and took their Constable,
The famous Montmorency, and the Rhinegrave,
Montpensier, Longueville and Gonzaga;
Leaving the son of Bourbon, duke of Enghien,
Young Roche du Maine, and others, men of note,
Dead on the field.

QUEEN.

And this, Sir, you call comfort:
That Spanish swords are flushed with victory
While our's are doomed to rust, our banners drooping,
In the aisles of Notre Dame. O shame! where sleep
The destriers that swept the field of Spurs!
Degenerate daughter, thou should'st have died and left
The sceptre to a man—More grief—more shame?

Enter LORD PAGET.

PAGET.

My liege, scarce had the late King's counterfeit
Been captured, when another knave sprang up,
Assuming the false name of Exeter:
Who straight made proclamation, by the style
Of the seventh Edward: daring audaciously
Therein to call your royal sister Queen,
And his affianced wife.

QUEEN.

O heavy day!
The old wound bleeds afresh. Spare me, good
God!

PAGET.

How will's your Grace to deal with these?

QUEEN.

Who knows not
The punishment of traitors? Smite their necks—
As they have smit this heart! Not for myself—
Not for myself, thou knowest O God, I strike—
But for my country, bleeding through my wounds!

Enter LORD HOWARD *of Effingham.*

I see disaster couched within thine eye.
Speak on—speak out.

LORD HOWARD.

The Scot hath passed the border,
In swarms, devastating our lands, defiling
Our household honour; slaughtering our babes!

MARY [*springing up*].

Bring forth my chariot, and my battle horses!
Princes should head their armies, and partake
The peril they provoke. The cry of war
Renerves my vigour. From my couch of pain
See, I have leaped, and flung my staff away,

Even as the cripple at the voice of Christ!

CARDINAL.

He is a God of peace. Link not his name
With thoughts of strife.

QUEEN.

God is the God of battles!
And rides forth in the vanward of His chosen.
Marvels he wrought in the old time by the hands
Of his anointed. Bring my regal helm—
And panoply of mail: and redcross shield.
I will go forth like Miriam, and hymn
The triumph of the Lord before His people!
Down-trampled Treason in the mire shall writhe
Like a crushed adder. We shall spurn the Scots;
And lash the hounds of France back to their kennel—
To horse—I cry aloud!

OXFORD [*aside*].

Obstruct her not.
This passion must have way. Already, mark you,
Her power collapses.

CARDINAL.

Fearful 'tis to witness
This conflict of fierce wrath with corporal weakness—
Thus devils rebuked, rend, ere they leave, their victims.

QUEEN.

I am very faint. Bring me a cup of water.
Time was—but it is gone: Time is—swift passing:
Time comes—but no reality for me!
I have reigned—I am lost! Let me die!

CARDINAL.

Break not—break not our hearts—Better the rage
That nerved you at the first.

QUEEN.

Dear Reginald!
We both are bound for death: which first I know not.
I shall not see the end: but what that end
I know. The spirit of prophecy is o'er me.
Cloud after cloud, great woes come frowning on:
A nation's wreck—the bloody death of Kings.
Call not, O Reginald, this mood despair.
That I have done with earth, and sigh for peace,
Need waken no man's wonder. Not disease—
Hearts of good cheer might conquer that—but grief,
Remorse, shame, strike me with stern gauntlets down:
While daily cares, petty anxieties,
Fret me to madness.

CARDINAL.

Great of soul wert thou,
And strong of heart, till now. Be so again.

QUEEN.

The strength of England, in my heart till now
Concentred, melting, leaves me but myself—
Sum up my personal life. You knew me first,
A daughter, witness of her mother's wrongs—
A daughter, conscious of her father's crimes—
A princess, shorn of her inheritance—
A lady, taunted with foul bastardy--
A sister, from her brother's heart estranged—
A sister, by a sister's hand betrayed—
A rightful queen, hemmed by usurping bands—
A reigning queen, baited by slaves she spared—
A maid betrothed, stung by the love she trusted—
A wedded wife, spurned from the hand that won her—
A Christian, reeking with the blood of martyrs—
And now, at length, a hated tyrant, dragging
Her People to unprofitable wars;
And from her feeble hold basely resigning
The trophy of long centuries of fame.
I have reigned—I am lost—let me die!

CARDINAL.

Is Calais worth these pangs? Ineptitude

Hath lost what valour shall regain.

QUEEN.

'Tis gone!—
For ever!—England's heritage of glory—
When shall her banner wave in France again?

CARDINAL.

When France outstrips her in the race of crime.

QUEEN.

Prophetick be thy words! But I shall lie
Forgotten in my grave ere then—Forgotten?
Forgotten! no! Shame's never dying echoes
Shall keep the memory of the bloody Mary
Alive in England. Vampyre calumny
Shall prey on my remains. My name shall last
To fright the children of the race I love.

CARDINAL.

Daughter, you err; forgetting in this passion
The justice of your Maker.

QUEEN.

Humbly I own it:
Impugning not the ways of Providence
Because I suffer. Justly the penalty
Of sin is meted to me.

CARDINAL.

With that thought
Consent to peace were easy.

QUEEN.

Peace? no peace
Till Calais be regained. No peace! my People—
All England shouts upon my dying ear.
No peace—no peace—till Calais be won back!

CARDINAL.

Peace is God's gift.

QUEEN.

Calais! thy name is graven
Upon my heart—You'll find it when I die!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene VII.

St. James's Palace, Queen's Chamber.

Queen, Margaret Douglas, Fakenham.

QUEEN.

When shall my foot have rest? You led me first
To Hampton Court from Richmond: then you said
The banks of Thame were marshy; and with pain
I have crept hither to St James's towers.
Holy the name! 'Twere well should I die here.
Why comes not the lord Cardinal?

FAKENHAM.

Too weak
He is to move. Slow fever racks his limbs.

QUEEN.

Our fates are strangely linked. We'll die together.
I have so dreamed before. Have you no news?

MARGARET.

Yes, madam, heavy news. The Emperor—

QUEEN.

Is dead? I know it ere you answer. Blest
Is he to be released from worldly cares,
And public calumny; his dying ears
Soothed by the prayers of saintly men; his limbs
By holy hands composed!—Who is it that comes?

Enter COUNT DE FERIA.

I see not plainly.

MARGARET.

Count de Feria.

COUNT [*kneeling*].

I seek your Grace with missives from the King.

QUEEN.

Will he not come to soothe a dying woman?

COUNT.

Pressing emergencies of state constrain him.
He prays your Grace to wear this jewelled ring,
In pledge of amity: and bids you live
In cheerful hope of bodily amendment.

QUEEN.

I shall not trouble him long. There is no hope.

COUNT.

And if there be no hope—which God forefend!—
He owns the Princess as your proper heir.

QUEEN.

This gives me joy unlooked for. Tell him, good
Feria,
I pledge him as he hopes for God's reward,
That he, when I am gone, unto my People
Shall prove himself a father in his care;
A brother in his love: and, furthermore,
In his great power a frank and ready friend
Unto my heir. Take this, a precious diamond,
His father's gift—and this, his own dear pledge—
These bid him keep—in memory of the Dead.
It pleased not God that I should leave behind me
A pledge of my affection—I am choked
With strange emotions—I must speak no more
Of this—nor Philip—Pardon my wanderings!—
O Virgin Mother! intercede for one
Whose thoughts—thus on the threshold of thy
glory—
Still earthward turn—

FAKENHAM.

You are exhausted, daughter.
Haply you might have sleep, if we retired.

QUEEN.

The last sleep comes! Call in my gentlewomen—
Let no strange hand profane my poor remains.
O heavy eyes! O fluttering heart! the hour
Is come that wafts you to eternity!
Where are you, Fakenham? Go not—

FAKENHAM.

I am here.

QUEEN.

I thought you gone, not seeing well. Some cordial—
For somewhat I have still to say. Where are you?

MARGARET.

We are, and shall be, near you.

QUEEN.

Give me your hand—
Why not my sister's hand? Ah, poor Jane Grey!
She was to Edward, while he died, a sister.
I am a sinful creature—bless you, sister!
—I would have speech with Pembroke.

MARGARET.

He is gone
To Hatfield.

QUEEN.

Winchester?

FAKENHAM.

He, too, is gone.

QUEEN.

Deserted on my deathbed!—Yet not so—
Dear friends, how many of ye still cling round me!
I am content. In truth, the agony
Is not what I had feared—Why this is nothing.
Be satisfied—I do not fear to die:
And, to say truth, have long time wished to die.
The mist that brooded o'er the face of things
Is lifted. Death is sent to make us sane.
—Bear to my cousin Pole—friend of my youth—
My last, last blessing. If he live, I charge him
To watch my sister with exceeding love.
If he be bound for heaven, his orisons
Shall plead for her he loved—too well—too sadly—
Before the all-seeing Judge. Take these, my jewels—
And that best gift of earth, a deathbed blessing,
Unto my sister. Not to strongly rule
This kingdom, (for I know, and fully trust
Her noble intellect) but fondly rule it,
Leaving the issue of her cares with God,
I supplicate, and warn her. For religion,
I know she is no Puritan; yet fear
She stumbles in her faith. At least, I pray her,
To be to others, as I was to her,

Indulgent. Let my debts be justly paid—
And from my goods endow an hospital
For worn out soldiers. Re-endow three convents
For the Observants, and, at Schene and Sion,
For charitable watching of the Poor.
No more—my breath comes painfully—dull sounds
Murmur around—Bury me with my Mother—
Raise tombs of honour—to our memory—
And grave on mine—the motto I have loved—
Prophetick—may it prove—Time unveils Truth!

FAKENHAM.

Her last words!—her lips quiver—her eyes close—
Hold up the cross! she sees—she—smiles—she dies! [*The Queen dies.*

Enter OXFORD *and* UNDERHILL.

FAKENHAM.

Too late you come, my lord—all that remains
Of Mary Tudor sleeps till the last trumpet!
How fares the Cardinal?

OXFORD.

He too is gone.
Some one brought rumour that the Queen was dying—

Whereat he suddenly grew pale; then smiled;
And cried, in act of death, "Receive my soul!—
Together we will rise to our Redeemer!"

FAKENHAM.

So, at our need, hath perished our last hope!
For first in worth, as place, was he in council;
And knew so well the interests of the State
Were with God's law entwined, that he became
Restorer of Religion; and made perfect
The shattered superstructure of the realm.
—What birth, outside the purple, was so glorious
As his, whose sire and mother both derived
Their lineage from the throne? The Church's champion,
He of her sons was the most moderate.
His learning was profound; his heart all bounty.
From youth he shunned the world. The privacy
Of rural life, pure air, the quiet stars,
Enamel'd meadows, breath of woods and streams—
At these, the breasts of Nature, he imbibed
Devotion—and so nursed his soul for heaven.
He travelled through that land whose names are story;
Beheld Rome's wonders; spiritually tasting
The intellectual flavour of an age
Whose noblest were his mates in after time.

When Harry probed him touching the divorce,
He lashed the royal vice, and woke its fury:
But God was his protection. Long he lived
A voluntary exile; watchful, studious.
Behold him next, a Cardinal, at Trent,
Presiding o'er the Council: then at Rome,
Refusing the great Christian bishoprick:
At Mentz, once more, a mild recluse; his soul
To letters, which he loved, and pious needs,
Devoted: and at last, recalled to England;
Restorer of the Cross!

OXFORD.

Amid the torrent
Of manifold opinions stood the Queen;
A rock, whose firm-fixed base defied all floods.
God set her on the throne of his own tower:
And, in his mercy, sent this Cardinal
To strengthen and to guide her.

FAKENHAM.

His was not
The tactique of the soldier: he advanced
His counsel with persuasion; ever suing
The royal heart for merciful awards;
While sterner men, or weaker, frowned or wavered.

OXFORD.

We have beheld these lights—but not preserved
them;

Now quenched for ever!

FAKENHAM.

England! my poor country!
Soiled with impiety, and blood of martyrs;
Shall Henry's sin never be expiated?
Shall his blind passions through our pangs be punished?
His blasphemies entail persistent error?
The limit and far scope of evil deeds
God metes alone, who metes their punishment.
Man has but to revere while he submits!

OXFORD.

If ever victim to a broken heart
Hath died, she lies before us. Awful Queen!
Hardly of thee Posterity shall judge—
For they shall measure thee—

UNDERHILL.

Let me speak, Sir;
For I have known, and been protected by her,
When fierce men thirsted for my blood. I say not
That she was innocent of grave offence;
Nor aught done in her name extenuate.
But I insist upon her maiden mercies,
In proof that cruelty was not her nature.
She abrogated the tyrannic laws
Made by her father. She restored her subjects

To personal liberty; to judge and jury;
Inculcating impartiality.
Good laws, made or revived, attest her fitness
Like Deborah to judge. She loved the Poor:
And fed the destitute: and they loved her.
A worthy Queen she had been, if as little
Of cruelty had been done under her,
As by her. To equivocate she hated:
And was just what she seemed. In fine she was
In all things excellent while she pursued
Her own free inclination without fear!

[*The curtain falls.*

THE

LAMENTATION OF IRELAND

AND OTHER POEMS.

TO THE

RIGHT HON. MAURICE FITZGERALD,

KNIGHT OF KERRY,

THE "LAMENTATION OF IRELAND"

IS INSCRIBED.

THOU noblest relic of a noble race,
Proud Geraldine of Kerry! with a grace
And chivalrous expression, like a tower,
The last, lone, beacon of baronial power—
Thou risest o'er my memory, and long
Shalt live there, shrined within the heart of song.
Once more thy lofty port and spiritual eye,
Like some embodied dream of chivalry,
Salute to me; and thine accents on mine ear
Swell, as when bending senates pause to hear.
Once more I see thee, in thy gentler hour,
Embosom'd in thine own sequester'd bower,
Even as a wild-bird in its happy nest,
With all thy young ones clinging round thy breast;

And that fair wife, so fondly at thy side,
Watching the picture with maternal pride;
And hailing through a trance of smiles and tears,
The dawning hope of visionary years.

Maurice! it is not friendship, nor the strain
Of kindred mingling in our household vein,
But 'tis thy worth, and that such thoughts suit well
The tenor of the tale I have to tell,
That draws this language from me. It is due
Doubly from me, though not required by you.
Hear then, my friend—for now, with trembling fingers
Thy bard proceeds, yet oft looks back, and lingers:
And as a youth first stepping into life,
(His guileless bosom throbbing in the strife
Of doubt and hope) looks round with bashful eyes,
The conscious blood still answering each surprise;
And feels upon his cheek, and fain would flee,
Those blushing messengers of Modesty—
Even so, perhaps, but with a paler look,
And saddened heart by sad misgivings shook,
Thy poet's eye, awaken'd from its trance,
Surveys the world, abash'd; and with a glance
Of meek entreaty, seeks amid the throng
Kind friends and gentle judges of the song.

THE

LAMENTATION OF IRELAND.

CALM was the evening and the sky serene,
All Nature smiled upon the golden hour;
The hills of corn were clad in liveliest green,
The meads in all the pomp of vernal flower:
The soft air was so thin, so clear,
Distance was lost in that pure atmosphere;
And brighter from its grove gleam'd the remote
church tower.

Majestic Shannon's smooth transparent wave,
Scarce heard to ripple, scarcely seen to glide,
Those lovely scenes in bright reflection gave,
Sketch'd o'er its breathless mirror far and wide:
As if some hand with skill divine,
Some mighty master traced each glowing line,
And tinged with magic hues the bosom of the tide.

On such an evening, ere the golden beam
From the warm landscape had begun to fade,

Musing along the margin of the stream,
In indolence of thought, my footsteps stray'd.
Sooth'd by the calm that reign'd around
(For not a sea breeze woke its lightest sound)
Along a wave-worn rock my languid limbs I laid.

There, as the crimson sunset flush'd the sky,
And, purpling, o'er the east thin shadows spread,
An aged man came slowly pacing by,
With drooping form, and low, dejected head.
An infant guide, with duteous hand,
His faltering footsteps led along the strand;
For though his eyes seem'd bright, the visual ray
had fled.

The meek, pale face, the flowing locks of snow,
The melancholy grandeur of his mien,
Triumphant o'er neglect, and want, and woe,
Witness'd that once more prosperous days had
been.
He seem'd, sole frowning o'er the plain,
As the last column of some ruin'd fane;
The monumental pile that consecrates the scene.

The last sad branch of Erin's minstrelsy,
Withering beneath the breath of power, he lay

The rich despis'd his song of low degree;
The poor had nought but smiles and tears to pay.
Here, on the solitary shore,
Here would he wander—here he loved to pour
A requiem to the dead at the still close of day.

"Lead me," he cried, "where my faint ear may seize
Delightful music as the waters lave;
Where I may feel the cool breath of the breeze,
Or scent the healthful odour of the wave—
They may not these delights withhold!"
A sudden flush cross'd his pale cheek, and told
The passionate grief that, thus, to the wild winds he gave.

"The harps are mute, th' inspiring bards no more,
Who woke in festive halls the thirst of fame:
Who, when red battle shook th'ensanguin'd shore,
And droop'd full many a youth of noble name,
Swept with bold hand the sounding wire,
Recall'd to ev'ry breast heroic fire,
And fanned to fiercest blaze th' expiring blush of shame!

" No minstrel now, through the umbrageous grove,
On tiptoe steals at midnight's silent hour,
To wake, with trembling hand, the lyre of love
Beneath the casement of his lady's tower;
And murmur o'er the conscious strings
A thousand tender, yet forbidden things,
To charm the yielding maid, and woo her to his bower.

" And why unstrung, unheeded, lies the lute?
Why does the warlike harp in silence sleep?
—Cold is the slave's sad heart—and his lips mute—
Dishonour'd woman bows her head to weep.
Music has lost its charms of yore:
The martial hymn can kindle hearts no more,
Nor steal from memory scenes that make the flesh to creep.

" It cannot now restore lost liberty !—
Th' oppressive yoke hath still'd each pulse of flame,
Whose fiery current once, tumultuously,
Had flush'd through every vein in tides of shame,
If but the hoary harper sang
The deeds of early days, or wildly rang
His country's living woes, his country's dying fame.

" Oh say not weaker fires glow'd in each breast
Of those subdued yet honourable men :
That patriot love their souls more lightly prest—
A noble strife is never wholly vain.
But *we* were not united, and *they* came
With all Ambition's singleness of aim—
How could unmarshal'd hosts their firm phalanx
sustain !

" No—we might boast in our long lineage
All that we love and reverence in mankind :
Hero and bard, the patriot and the sage,
With strength of arm and energy of mind :
And in the household bowers of love
Fond wives and bashful maids are seen to
move,
In every virtue strong, by every grace refined.

" Alas ! dim shadows of immortal mind,
That, cloud-like, sweep o'er memory's silent waste,
Mark'd by no eye but his, the unconfined,
Bold votary of song !—how swift ye haste,
Upon the subtle winds of Time,
(Fast fading pageants of a fickle clime)
To yon dark bound whence ye may never more
be traced !

" Forgotten warriors of a righteous band
Who, vainly combating for freedom, died—
Such is your fate!—though worthy to command
A station with the noblest, whom the pride
Of a great People consecrates to fame:
Yielding such homage to the patriot name,
As kingly power had vainly proffer'd or denied.

" Heroes! still worship'd by the faithful few—
Where lives the memory of each glorious deed
That Poesy's warm lip should aye renew?—
Cold are the hands that spread abroad the seed,
Which, rooted in immortal verse,
On every wind the harvest might disperse
Of ripe renown, the soldier's hard-earn'd, noblest meed.

" To dull ears, and a palsied intellect
The passionless minstrel falters: he, no more,
May in his clear strain, as a glass, reflect
The flash of arms and war's ensanguin'd shore:
He dares not name, he cannot feel,
Fires such as pulsed thy red right hand, O'Neil!
Or in thy swarth eye blazed, tameless Mac Carthy more!

" Oh names! dear sounds!—how my heart bounds again,

As I pronounce ye thus—I see you all—
In chivalrous array, a glittering train;
As erst 'neath Cashel's rock, in Tara's hall,
On sculptur'd throne, or barbed steed
By royal Roderick, far-fam'd Brian, led,
Ye stamp'd the doom of law, or peal'd the battle-call!

"And thus thy towers, Lixnaw, rise to mine eye,
Where proud Fitzmaurice hous'd his princely line—
Still on Slieve Logher's wilds, the pennons fly,
And rings the war-shout of the Geraldine—
(Whose noblest veins blend in one flood
The Tuscan and remote Milesian blood)
There, with his knights, sweeps by Desmond's old Palatine!

"And are all fled?—Is great Tyrone forgot?
And the Tyrconell but a stranger's name?
Honour'd Gilpatrick! has it been thy lot
That Butler's brow should bear thy lineal claim?
Oh! must the spoiler's earthquake trace
O'erthrow thy rampire's well-proved strength, Dunmase!
Where once O' Ruark's warm heart throbb'd to the pulse of fame!

"Ah! brainsick phantasms! to these sightless balls
Vainly ye crowd—in vain your spectral bands
Troop in baronial pomp from feudal halls;
Crowns on your brows, and falchions in your hands.
Your roof-tree's crush'd—the very grave
Is rooted up, where slept the outlaw'd brave—
And exil'd bones, unwept, moulder in foreign lands!

"Ruthless Oblivion silently pervades
Your homes, your temples, your forgotten tombs.
Not all thy terraced grandeur, forest shades,
Lixnaw! could save thee from the spoiler:—glooms
Of double night shroud Cashel's holy fane:
And o'er Kilmallock's bawn and cloister'd plain
The hermit night owl broods, and the wild bittern booms!

"Tis past!—all's lost—Oh fatal Athunree!
Thy bloody scene swells on my blasted eyes—
The tumult, the suspense, the agony!
Aughrim! again thy banded woes arise—
And all thy damning shames are there,
In the wild freshness of their first despair—
In vain my country bleeds—in vain each victim dies!

" Ay, we were lost! and, foremost in the throng,
Came the cloak'd foes, of all our ills the worst;
Faction, and feudal hate, and household wrong,
And Treason's parricidal hand accurst!
All the vile Passions were abroad,
With their true savage allies, Force, and Fraud;
And the full heart of Shame was trampled 'till it
burst!

" 'Tis past—the earthquake's past! We are bereft
Of all; by all deserted. Ample scope
For feeling still remains—and we are left
Memory and Hope!—Oh no—we have no hope!
We have no hope! We, slaves
Look but for quiet deaths, and decent graves,
Freedom from stripes, and chains, the dungeon,
and the rope!

" Behold yon forest hills, yon harvest plains,
Proud towers, and frowning portals of the great:
Say, whose the birthright of those fair domains?
—The serf should govern, where mysterious fate
Hath stamp'd him slave—yet, mark those eyes of
gloom,
That cheek that wears the livery of the tomb;
Vengeance is shadow'd there, and long-surviving
hate!

" Observe, beneath yon hovel's brownest shade,
With wasted form, sunk cheek, and faded eye,
Where listless droops the long neglected maid,
Reft e'en of hope to soothe her misery.
Oh, had she breath'd in earlier days,
The voice of bards had hymn'd her matchless
praise !
Princes had knelt around, and heroes learn'd to
sigh !

" Fled, fled is now, each high-born sentiment;
For ages have elapsed since we were free :
Long have our weary limbs reluctant bent
To every shrine, but that of Liberty.
Scarce does tradition paint the past;
No minstrel lives to make its memory last—
To nourish in young breasts hopes of futurity."

The old man ceased—and, as he ceased, there fell
Upon his wither'd hand a heavy tear.
Oft, round his sightless orbs, I mark'd it swell—
As oft repress'd as it collected there.
At length he could no more control
The honourable weakness; and his soul
To shame and grief pour'd out it's passionate
arrear.

TO MY BELOVED WIFE ON HER BECOMING OF AGE.

COULD my heart speak, each rapid throb would say,
" May every other breast be glad to day !"
This day, my wife, thy natal star on high
The one and twentieth time has decked the sky ;—
Oh may it long in those fair regions glow,
Unstained by error, and undimmed by woe !
May every blessing strew thy course of life,
Thou matchless mother, more than matchless wife !

Twice has the year, and many a month beside,
Beheld thee clinging to my sheltering side :
And many a moment, many a tedious day,
When health, repulsed, had stolen her blush away,
Has seen thee patient on the couch of pain
From waxing morn to evening's pensive wane.
Thy form the weight of malady oppressed—
No murmur of complaint disturbed thy breast :

Snatched from thy heart a promised babe was
torn—
But blest are those who mourn as thou didst
mourn!
Resigned still wert thou to thy God's decree,
And trusted that at length he would remember
thee.

Oh we are blest indeed! Our moments glide
Calm and unruffled as the noiseless tide,
Stirred but by zephyrs mild and pleasure-fraught,
That curl the surface like a pleasant thought.
Our boy each day blossoms with new-born charms:
Two households cage him in imprisoning arms—
We with our parents' tenderest love are blest:
Unrivalled reign we both in each fond breast.
Look round! Let fancy flit o'er every clime;
Let memory question long recording time;
Then answer make if aught that thou hast seen
Presents a pair so blest as we have been.
Oh let us then with hearts united pray
That every other heart rejoice to day!

Bath, Nov. 26, 1809.

FRAGMENT.

SEE from its ambush yon fair infant peeping—
Now here now there his sparkling eyes are sweeping.
And now he pouts, and chides your lazy pace,
Now loudly clamours with triumphant face;
Whilst every varying and capricious whim
Accordant motion gives to each smooth limb.

1809.

A WALK BY THE SHORE AT ILFRACOMB.

YES, I delight, when winds and waters roar,
To tread with shrinking foot the craggy shore;
And watch each billow with collected force
Urge o'er the whirling sands its frothy course:
O'er yon black rock whose frowning bastion braves,
And breaks, the onset of the wintry waves,

To mark it dash in snowy showers its spray,
That flames and flashes in the blaze of day;
Or fall from ledge to ledge like mountain stream,
Its foam-balls reddened by the evening beam.
Lulled by the tumult, oft, in thoughtful mood,—
On yonder rock how often have I stood,
And breathed moist air, and wooed the briny shower,
Absorbed, and reckless of the passing hour;
Nor moved until the tide, with deaf'ning sound,
Circled my narrowing station close around;
Then, as the exhausted wave forsook the strand,
With foot elastic pressed the yielding sand;
And, ere its force regathered, with a bound
Gained the dry shore, and spurned the grassy ground.
Thence with rude toil I clomb yon cliff's steep brow,
And viewed, enraptured, all the scene below:
A vast expanse of heaving billows, crowned
With trembling, snowlike foam, exulted round;
And 'neath my feet, between each watery vale,
I marked the white-winged sea gull slowly sail.
Along th' horizon, wide those cliffs were spread
To which the royal Edward fain had fled,
Thenceforth from faction and from force secure,

Where Lundy's sea-born ramparts long as time
endure.
* "O black-browed nymph, with forehead broad
and high,
That oft hast witched the sea-gods with thine eye,"
Majestic Severn's favourite Ocean-maid!
I've gazed on thee, till every line would fade,
Melting in some black cloud's distended breast
That on the waters sank in gloomy rest;
Then sought the rude arch of some sheltering
cave,
And heard, through stony walls, the tempest rave.
1809.

LINES WRITTEN AFTER MY INSPECTION OF LUNDY ISLAND.

NO fragrant banks, no flower-enamelled mead
Beside soft murmuring streamlets here are
spread;
No solemn groves o'erarch a grateful shade;
No woodbine paints the gloom with flowery braid:

* Drayton's Poly-Olbion.

No tepid zephyrs, where the poppy blows,
Steal o'er the closing lids, and breathe repose:
No nightingale salutes the advancing year;—
The sea-bird's clang remote rings musical but
drear:
And yet should fate our footsteps hither call,
We'd live content within this wind-swept hall:
With eye complacent, and with mind serene,
Would view, and weigh, the grand but savage
scene:
For Love would still be ours; and from on high
Virtue with steadfast smile our union ratify.

Beneath yon rock with antique ivy crowned,
Whose ample shadow veils the heathy ground,
No wayward wish would paint the hawthorn glade,
The hazel bower, or elm-tree colonnade.
Should our eyes rove o'er yon cerulean tide,
Where England's freighted navies proudly ride,
No vain regrets would linger o'er the rill
That, glittering, winds beneath the oak-crowned
hill.
Rough gales that oft the misty headlands scourge
Would brace the frame, a healthier footstep urge:
And while sonorous billows beat the shore
On woodland memories we would dwell no more.

1809.

FRAGMENT, WRITTEN AT SOUTHILL PARK.

FAR from the tainted vapours of the town,
Sweet heath bells blushing o'er their beds of brown,
Beside the Thames, a sylvan wanderer here,
I wander also with as frank a cheer.
Here man, released from Fashion's false command,
Feels with each opening scene his heart expand:
Cheered by the unchecked breath of heaven his soul,
Like a fanned flame aspiring, mocks control:
With light limbs bounding o'er the fenceless green,
His heart partakes the freedom of the scene.

Freely I tread the moor, or pierce the brake
Where tangled boughs a winding pathway make,
Or light Acacias feathering in the gale
Quiver a net-like shade along the vale,
Sad'ning the air with odours. Free I rove
Beneath the Pinewood's dim, majestic grove.
There, as the slow unwonted tread invades
Their haunts congenial and their native shades,

Along each waving bough, from tree to tree,
The glancing squirrel bounds in chattering glee.
There furry tribes, with tiptoe pause between,
Point the long ear, and bound along the green;
And timid hares, beneath the trembling fern,
Wake to the breeze, or dream of hounds and horn.

Nor less the heathy waste has charms for me.
There, o'er dark hills I wander, far and free.
High o'er the rest one hill commands the scene,
Various in culture, and wide woods between:
Here ripe o'er sunny slopes a harvest glows;
There in soft shade the umbrageous vales repose:
Along the bright horizon hills arise,
Blue hills seen dimly under azure skies:
More near, fair cottages and lordly halls
Flash an impartial light from sparkling walls.
O'er all fleet shades of ever-varying mood
Each other still pursue and are pursued.
Round the wide summit, fosse, and lofty mound,
Works of long buried ages frown around—
Stranger, behold the work of Cæsar's hand!
Here Cæsar stood—here Cæsar gave command!

* * * * * * *

1810.

SUNSET ON THE LOWER SHANNON.

STILLED are the winds—scarce heard far
ocean's roar:
And maiden waves creep coyly to the shore,
Tinged with the purest blush of closing even.
Behold yon hills that catch the glow of heaven!
Those shadows purpling o'er the watery scene,
Now streaked with gold—now tinged with tender
green,
And yon bright path that burns along the deep,
Ere the sun sinks behind his western steep!
Soft fades the parting glory through the sky,
Commingling with the cool aerial dye.
Light barques, with dusky sails, scarce seen to
glide,
Bend their brown shadows o'er the burnished tide;
And hark! at intervals the sound of oars
Comes, faint with distance, to the listening shores,
Blent with the plaintive cadence of the song
Of boatmen chanting as they drift along;—
But see—the radiant orb now sinks apace—
Gradual and slow he stoops his glorious face;

And now, but half his swelling disk appears—
And now—how quickly gone! he scarcely rears
One burning point above the mountain's head—
And now, the last expiring beam has fled.

Mount Trenchard, 1811.

SONG.

THE light of love can never
As meaner flames expire:
Its beam survives for ever
Like Delphi's sacred fire.

Undimmed by mortal leaven
It cheers our mortal doom:
And lives again in heaven,
Triumphant o'er the tomb.

1812.

BUSACO.

A BATTLE-SKETCH.

THE shadows lie broad on yon mountainous heath,
And deep sinks the gloom in the valleys beneath;
Black clouds veil the sky, and the night breeze blows chill

From the wild matted woods round the base of the hill.
But the wind dies away as the morning is near,
And the gathering of foemen sounds sharp on the ear;
For the morrow's first sun must behold their array
As they march to the battle, and challenge the fray.

The dawn kindles fast; as an inflowing tide,
The bright beams dilate o'er a wilderness wide;
Like isles of the air gleams each pinnacled height,
With its feet wrapped in clouds, and its head crowned with light;
While darkness still broods o'er the dingles below,
And Mondego's fierce currents in solitude flow.
There's a tremulous gleam through the vapoury air,
Where the tower-crowned ridge of Busaco stands bare;
And the long level ray of the morning illumes
A bright throng of bayonets, banners, and plumes:
But the silence of nature, the calm of the hour,
Is preserved by that resolute host in their power.

How softly the heath-scented gale breathes around!
How sweet grows from distance the waterfall's sound,

As its deep tone unites with the dove's matin song,
And the melody floats on the breezes along!
O breezes of heaven! how soon must ye swell
With the thunders of battle, and combatants' yell!
Pure torrents! how soon must ye burst on the plain,
All crimson with slaughter, all choked with the slain!

Hark! hark! 'twas the dreadful artillery's roar!
And Mondego, re-echoing, shouts from his shore!
O'er the smoke proudly hover the eagles of France—
Through the sulphurous gloom the invaders advance—
Hark again! 'twas the drum, 'twas the trumpets' fierce clang,
And the mad'ning cheers of the charge that rang—
See, they scale the steep rocks—see, the summit is won;
And as thousands are crushed, bolder thousands rush on—
Vain—vain every toil! for the Britons are there!
And the red cross triumphantly floats on the air—
And the fierce sons of Erin are there in their might,
And invincible Wellington marshals the fight—

There, foremost, he stands, where the battle-balls
fly,
And Victory follows the glance of his eye.
Spur, Elchingen, spur! nor thy charger restrain,
Though he trample alike both the dying and
slain;
For thy panic-struck bands fly the bayonet's shock,
As some pale torrent headlong leaps forth from
a rock.
Spur, Elchingen, spur; o'er the dying and slain,
And curb the wild rout of yon recreant train—
For all scattered, like sparks from a down trodden
fire,
Unresisting they fly, unavailing expire!
Oh, vain every effort! who dreameth to bind
The surges of ocean, or limit the wind?
Still they fly—but the death shout resounds in
their ear;
And the tramp of the foemen grows near and
more near—
For Britain now bursts on the fugitive throng,
And sweeps, like an avalanche, resistless along.

'Tis sunset—and now, from the bright edge of
heaven
Yon orb shoots aloft the last glories of even,

And the glowing clouds float o'er the crimson sky,
Like triumphant standards of victory!
O'er far Caramula the blood-red stain,
As if risen from earth, streams from heaven again,
And Estrella seems dyed to her topmost peak,
Like the deepening flush of an angry cheek—
'Tis sunset—the sounds of the fight die away,
The conflict expires with the waning day;
The fugitives rush through the ilex shade,
And fling from their grasp the encumbering
blade—
Yet hark! still arise from the path of the foe
New records of vengeance, new wailings of woe;
The villages blaze, and beneath the red gleam,
Swell the shouts of the spoiler and victim's scream.
The foe like the drag of a refluent tide,
Is fiercest at parting, and none may abide!

* * * * * *

The tempest is past—but, what murmurs are these,
That fitfully pass on the swell of the breeze?—
'Twas the last sob of pain—the last struggle of
death,
And the stifled moan of the parting breath!

1812.

FRAGMENT.

How sweet that little lawn amid the woods,
  Where carelessly at eve my footsteps stray;
Where mingling Oak unfold their russet buds,
  And tender Larch amid the breezes play;
And Birch twigs wave, and thorns of purest bloom
Shed through the grateful air their fresh perfume.

How picturesquely springs the ferny scene,
  With wild-flowers grouped in negligent array,
And the soft carpet of the mossy green,
  Where oft I loved to sport, an infant gay,
While joy was in my limbs, and in mine eye,
And every nerve was strung to ecstasy!

* * * * * *

1812.

THE ASSIGNATION.

FAIL not, my love,
  To meet me at th' appointed hour;
Beneath the grove,
Where hollies weave their glossy bower.

With footfall light,
That none may hear thy faltering pace—
With veil drawn tight,
That none may see thy blushing face.

Haste then, O haste!
For time drags on most wearily—
The moments waste,
Sacred to love and privacy.

To human eye
Impervious are these mantling trees:
No word or sigh
Can sound amid the rustling breeze.

While thus at even
In rapturous solitude we lie,
The smiles of heaven
Shall bless our spotless ecstasy.

For when these arms
Around thy gentle form are prest,
No vain alarms
Shall pain thy pure, confiding breast.

When our lips meet,
And when our glowing cheeks unite,—

When our hearts beat,
Together press'd in fond delight,—

Still shall no thought
Unworthy vestal love arise;
No glances, fraught
With fires unhallow'd, light these eyes.

Should our eyes fill
With rapture's mutual, conscious tear;
Should our frames thrill
With man's bold hope, and maiden's fear,

Yet, cease to fear!
Hope only whispers Hymen's name;
And points how near
He waves his torch of holiest flame.

1813.

TRUE LOVE.

TRUE love by words can ill prevail;
And shuns the idly flattering tale:
His language is the pleading eye
Fixed in devotion silently.

'Tis not the tear drop at command,
Nor pressure of the practised hand,
Nor sigh, nor smile—not these impart
The holy homage of the heart.

No! true love, like true piety,
Pays its devotion silently;
Surviving like a martyr's faith,
When human hope is past in death.

1813.

THE BENUMBED BUTTERFLY.

BEAUTIFUL creature, how I envy thee!
Pillowed on that soft bosom, gently heaving
In its transparent purity; more fair
Thus exquisitely shadowed by thy wings
Of crimson, purple-eyed, bedropt with gold.
The morning chill nigh killed thee:—happy
creature!
Thou wilt revive again, like a glad soul
In paradise; and tremble in thy bliss,
And wave thy wings rejoicing. Ha! even now
The breath of love that ruffles o'er thy down,

Like summer breezes o'er a bed of flowers,
Hath stirred the life within thee, and awakened
The fragile spirit of thy tender frame.

But see—she smiles, she smiles! her sunny mouth
Dimples with hope and joy; her dewy eyes
Are full of pity. O how sweet to watch
The heaven-like changes of that angel face!
She smiles upon thee; and, as if new life
Came like an emanation from her eye,
Thou leap'st to life again.—Ah, silly one;
Say, wilt thou leave that haven of delight
And safety, where she cherished thee, like Love,
And nourished thee with pity and warm sighs?
Alas! like Love ungrateful! So, poor elf,
Inebriate with joy, thy giddy wing
Shall, for a time, thy form from flower to flower
Waft; but autumnal dews shall soon benumb
The little feeble heart within thee; soon
Like the harsh season of adversity,
Night winds shall find thee out, and thou shalt
die—
No gentle breast to shelter thee again.

Oh! what a throng of similes I wove
For thee, while, cradled in that happy place,

Thou slept'st supine! Methought that thou wert
like
A delicate flower cast on a bank of snow;—
Like Cupid nestling in his mother's arms;—
Like a fair barque from winds and waves escaped,
Close harboured in a warm and sheltered creek;—
Like a star beaming from the milky way;—
A monarch on his throne of ivory;—
A jewelled brooch;—a bright autumnal leaf
Rocked on a limpid wave;—a humming bird
Perched on the blossom of the orange tree:—
Or fairy sprite, etherial Oberon,
Sleeping within a lily's stainless cup;—
Or, dearer still, as famous poets feign,
A Psyche, in her emblematic dress
Of life, and joy, and immortality,
Harmlessly dreaming near her wedded love.
Nor these alone—but thou art fled; and I,
Ingrate! have chattered more than thou art worth.

1815.

EPITAPH ON SIR JOHN MOORE.

HIS was a true-touched soul, kind, steadfast, warm,
Yet a high spirit nothing could disarm;
A heart though strung to every note of fame,
With kind vibration just to friendship's claim;
A manly form—an eye of strong control,
The proud to daunt and cheer the downcast soul;
A keen activity that knew no rust,
Grasping bright honour's form even in the dust;
And sighing for the glory yet to come,
Though glory wears a crown of martyrdom.
Such were his hopes; nor less his destiny;
Peril was his, and toil, by land and sea:
A grand career, closed by a death of pride,
The Patriot's death—and conquering he died!

THE WIDOW.

AWAY! I will not be repressed!
Where does he lie—Oh tell me where?
Once let me clasp him to my breast,
Ere yet it freezes in despair!
Oh! I'll be calm and I'll be mute—
You shall not hear me once complain:
Deny not then my feeble suit—
Let me but see him once again!
Husband! it is thy wife caresses,
And strains thee to a last embrace:
The mother of thy children presses
With trembling lips thy pallid face!
Feel how these arms thy form enfold!—
He hears not—feels not my warm breath!
His lips are chill—his heart is cold—
All stiffened in the frost of death.
Those eyes are rayless, whence the light
Of love, so full of meaning, stole—
Rigid those lips, whose lost delight
Thrilled breathless rapture o'er my soul!
That voice is mute whose touching tone
My heart would always leap to hear!

It whispered thou wert all mine own—
And still it murmurs in mine ear.
I have no hope—life has no worth—
My spirit crushed, my reason shaken!
Oh what have I to do with earth—
A lonely wretch by hope forsaken!

1815.

THE FLIGHT OF NAPOLEON.

IF thou hadst chosen a sterner lot,
Deathless had been thy meed of fame:
The blinded world had soon forgot
The tyrant's in the hero's name!

Live! that the story of thy pride
May share thine own dishonoured grave;
And teach the world how near allied
The despot and the slave!

TO A FRIEND

REQUESTING ME TO WRITE A POEM ON A GREAT VICTORY.

ANOTHER time—not now—not now—
That task of pride is not for me,
To wreath around the hero's brow
The trophies of bright poesy.

The echoes of the antique lyre
Have died along my feeble string:
My lips have lost the poet's fire—
Alas! I have not heart to sing.

Oh! not for me that tale to tell;
To point the grave where honour lies!
Far nobler harps and bards shall swell
The triumph of such obsequies.

Yet think not that my heart is chill
Though with its triumph sadness blend;—
Beneath the awful shock of steel
I, too, have lost a bosom friend.*

* Captain the Honourable William Cecil Pery, second son of the Earl of Limerick, who fell gloriously on the breach of Saint Sebastian.

He fought upon the stormy deep;
Then leaped to land at glory's call:
And now his long-loved ashes sleep
'Neath far Sebastian's ruin'd wall.

Yet, oft as memory loves to rest
On that career so bright yet brief,
I feel a fire within my breast
That dries the starting tear of grief!
1815.

LINES

ON THE DEATH OF THE HON. WILLIAM CECIL PERY KILLED AT THE STORMING OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

I.

THE sting of grief is sharp;
Yet proudly falls the tear
When glory strikes her harp
Above the hero's bier:
And grand the spirit's flight
When sink the brave to die
Mid the tumult of the fight
And victory's gathering cry.

II.

And though he lives no more
Our love shall live and last,
Lingering in reverence o'er
The memory of the Past:
And every manly thought
With secret joy shall tell
How gloriously he fought—
Nor murmur that he fell.

III.

Cold, William, cold art thou!
But I remember well
When o'er that clear frank brow
No cloud of sorrow fell.
For thou wert like the lark,
With song thy sports beguiling;
A gem of diamond spark,
A flower in sunshine smiling!

IV.

'Tis hard from all to part
To which affection clung!
The kindness of the heart—
The fervour of the tongue—

Yet that dear form of thine
I would not renovate:
So bright thine honours shine,
'Twere sin to change thy fate!

1815.

ODE

TO THE DUCHESS OF ANGOULEME.

I.

FAINT wanderer of an exiled race!
Sad orphan of a martyred sire!
Come to thy first, last resting place;
From worldly pomp and woe retire.
Come in thy tearless agony,
With marble cheek and frozen eye;
Oh come, all hopeless as thou art,
And lay thee down in peace, and still thy bursting heart!

II.

Victim of too severe a fate,
Wert thou too lightly tried before,
Snatched from the ruins of a State,
And sprinkled with paternal gore?

Were all thy trials deemed too few,
That still thy wounds must bleed anew?
Still must it be thy mournful doom,
To pine o'er sorrows past, and brood o'er woes to come?

III.

Oh! nursed in pomp, and born to power,
To wisdom's influence, beauty's spell!
What lot was thine? the orphan's dower—
Where was thy home?—the felon's cell!
Thy woes at length by time beguiled,
Once more deceitful fortune smiled;
And woke thee with so grand a strain,
The rush of sudden joy was almost felt like pain.

IV.

Then was thine hour of triumphing;—
If aught of mortal frailty
Around that chastened heart could cling,
Or fire that scarce uplifted eye:—
But thine was joy so softened down
By sorrow's unforgotten frown,
That still through smiles the tear-drop stole,
As new-born hope and memory blended in thy soul.

V.

Sad was thy pensive countenance,
In silent prayer upraised to heaven;
In prayer for thy repentant France,
Guilty so late, so soon forgiven.
Such wert thou, when th' acclaiming throng,
Bore thee triumphantly along:—
So calm, so holy, seemed thy joy,
Even hearts unused to melt were touched to sympathy.

VI.

What deep emotion o'er thee swept,
When first that solemn mass was sung;
When kneeling thousands bowed and wept
And joined in prayer thy faltering tongue!
At times, as paused the organ's roll,
Thy moan came sadly on the soul;
Thy shrouded form, pale, bent in prayer;—
It seemed as though long-lost Religion's self was there!

VII.

Lo where with pomp and pageantry,
Yon dark, funereal train of woe
Pass, like a mourner's memories, by,
To wailing dirges, soft and slow!

Once more thy tortured moan is heard,
Responsive to each sacred word;
Blent with the organ's plaintive tones
Pouring sad requiem o'er the consecrated bones.

VIII.

Ay! thousands wept, and thousands blest,
And thousands round thy footsteps hung;
As new-born reverence swelled the breast,
As pity probed, repentance stung.
Yet these, the men—oh mortal stain!
When shall we trust mankind again?
The self-same breath that fanned thy way
Welcomes the usurper back, and ratifies his sway!

IX.

Awake, awake! we do but dream!
We dream of troubles past from earth—
Awake! 'tis Fancy's feverish gleam,
Shadowing terrific visions forth:
The bloody spectre of the past
Hath risen o'er our rest at last;
Sweeps in unreal terrors by,
With terror-stricken mien, and woe-denouncing cry!

X.

Awake? alas, this is no sleep—
No dream—we feel—we hear—we see—
At least our tears are true; we weep,
And trembling, scan Futurity!
We thought, oh fools! his light was quenched,
His fires decayed, his lustre blenched:
Nor dreamed a sun so darkly set
Might o'er the world arise in storm and terror yet.

XI.

Lo! Discord claps her raven wings,
And lurking Havock inly smiles;
The sultry Siroc blows, and brings
The Desert's burthen on the Isles:
For now, the spoiler of the earth
Moves, like the Eastern Idol, forth:—
Around his mad'ning victims reel,
And cast their limbs beneath his pitiless chariot wheel.

XII.

Or haply, like th' Arch-fiend, when first
The confines of the world he trod,
Fierce from his bonds so lately burst,
Scathed by the thunderbolts of God;

When, every Angel-guard at last
With guileful tongue and swift wing passed,
He bent malignant o'er his prey,
With flattering smiles to curse, and tempting to betray.

XIII.

And yet, by heaven, 'twas nobly bold,
(Howe'er the day be lost or won)
Thus like the Roman chief of old
To dare another Rubicon.
Not then was his, that Roman heart
So fiercely tried, as now thou art:
One final strife 'twas his to fight;—
But thou must turn to stem the world's collected might.

XIV.

Foul rebel! did no tongue, no eye,
No corse, thy desperate march oppose?
And, Louis, wert thou doomed to fly,
'Mid quaking friends and pitying foes?
Oh better to have braved the strife,
The tyrant's frown, th' assassin's knife,
Mournfully in royal state enthroned,
Thy lost, devoted race, and faithful peers around!

XV.

So erst, still in misfortune great,
Sternly composed, calm in despair,
So erst, Rome's awful Senate sat;
Nor raised an arm, nor breathed a prayer
Dauntless they sat, though wild at hand
Barbarians stormed with fire and brand:
Immoveable, to fate resigned,
Rome was triumphant still in her unconquered mind.

XVI.

Yet why from modern Man expect
The vigour of an earlier day?
Dimly at best do we reflect
The worth of ages past away.
The virtues of the days gone by
Shine like the blessed stars on high;
Pouring through Time's long, troubled night
A guiding ray serene, inimitably bright.

XVII.

We're fallen upon portentous times,
A stormy yet degenerate age;
Our world a theatre of crimes,
A tragic scene, a bloody stage.

In after days we little guess
How abject in their nakedness,
How base of heart, how mean of mind,
Our deeds shall stand amid the annals of mankind.

XVIII.

And after ages, when thy doom
Is but a tale of history,
Shall mourn around thine exiled tomb,
Sad daughter of Adversity!
Aye, they shall weep, when tears are vain:
Their tears shall deepen every stain;
When thou art gone beyond the sky,
Throned in immortal peace with Him that dwells on high.

1815.

ON THE DEATH OF SIR THOMAS PICTON,

SLAIN AT WATERLOO.

OH give to the hero the death of the brave!
On the field where the might
Of his fame sheds a light
Through the gloom that o'ershadows the grave.

Let him not be laid on the feverish bed;
There to waste like the ray
Of a taper away,
And live 'till the spirit be dead.

Oh no! he should lie on Fame's death-bed of pride—
Sword in hand on the plain,
'Mid the throng of the slain,
Where the trumpet of victory sang as he died.

No—not with the stealth of disease let him die—
He should bound on the flood
Of his fame and his blood
To the hero's bright home of the sky!

For the life-blood whose stream to our country is given,
In the pride of its worth
Shall be honour'd on earth
And the spirit be hallow'd in heaven.

Such fate, gallant Picton, was thine—when the few,
Who surviv'd thee in fight,
Won the day by the light
Which thy deeds shed around Waterloo.

ODE

TO THE EAGLE STANDARD.

I.

BIRD of war! beneath thy wing
Death hath marched through every age;
Beneath thy dark plume's shadowing
Sought battle's wildest rage:
Where'er, through gathering clouds afar,
Thine eye hath hailed red Victory's star,
'Tis writ in blood on history's page,
That man will rush through fire and ruin,
And follow—to the world's undoing.

Herald of conquest! round thy path
The cannon's breath of fire,
The spear, the sabre's edge of wrath,
In dreadful pomp conspire:
And all the hundred arms of Death,
Like lightnings from a thunder-cloud,
Along thy way,
With ruthless sway,
Hurl his fell shafts around the self-devoted crowd.

Emblem of Power! though sceptred hand
Hath made thee clasp the monarch's wand,
And taught thee with despotic eye
To wear the crown of empery—
Methinks that in thy Roman dress,
The winged lightnings sternly grasping,
A laurel wreath thy bright form clasping,
There beamed a mightier nobleness;
And steadier was thy stress,
While onward, over half the world,
The shadow of thy flight was hurled.

II.

War was not then the wily game
Of calculating strategy,
But a fierce appetite for fame
In hearts resolved to do or die.
Then sword to sword, and shield to shield,
Men trod the fateful battle-field,
And vowed, as host to host drew nigh,
Living, to rule the world victorious,
Or find in death defeat more glorious.

Lo! when that Roman brotherhood
Met in the triple strife,

But one survived that day of blood;
One mourned his lonely life:
And when at length, though long withstood,
Rome triumphed on the Punic shore,
Along the land
Oblivion's hand
Passed, and the very name of Carthage was no more.

Thenceforth no arm of human might
Had vigour to withstand thy flight;
Beneath thy wing all power grew weak,
And conquest could not glut thy beak.
The Druid, from his mystic hall,
Saw thy coming o'er the ocean,
And sought his woods in dread emotion;
The Pict, beyond his northern wall,
Stood trembling; and the Gaul,
And the rude tribes of German birth,
Crouched down in terror to the earth.

III.

What prowess then could cope with thine?
Greece, father-land of glory, tell!
Too brief thy strife round freedom's shrine!
Too faint, alas! when freedom fell!
What wonder if soft Persia's train

And Ind's dark myriads fought in vain;
That vain was Egypt's priestly spell;
And Scythian club, and Libyan quiver,
Were all too feeble to deliver!

Such was thine early habitude,
Stern harbinger of Fate!
And still thou art as keen of blood,
And more insatiate.
Then Science aye thy course pursued,
Attendant on each vast emprize;
In bright career
The Arts were near;
And Triumph checked his hand, and paused to civilize.

Not such thy course in modern times;
But dark with woes, and red with crimes:
A meteor, leaving on the wind
A wake of fire, and gloom behind.
Let smoking Okzakow's despair—
Let all those shapes of desolation,
Death, sacrilege, and violation,
That thronged lost Poland's midnight air,
Late-rescued Spain's, declare—
Let Moscow's fate—Napoleon's name,
Through every age thy deeds proclaim.

IV.

Days of horror! still from you
The eyes of men shall sickening turn;
And memory tremble to renew
Scenes that make the brain to burn.
Oh! tear those blood-stained wreaths aside—
Nor of our madness make our pride.
Those grim, unhallowed trophies spurn!
Sad signs are they of deeds unholy,
Badges of crime, and stamps of folly!

Hark! hark! on every side the cries
Of anguish and despair
And mingling imprecations rise
With many a bootless prayer!
Once more, from out his stormy skies,
The Eagle kens the known dismay;
And speeds his flight
With fell delight—
Stoops with accustomed aim, and pounces on his prey.

Bird of war! thy reign is past:
That fiercest onset was thy last.
The wrath of Heaven was roused; and, lo!
A banded world stands up thy foe.

A stouter grasp, a loftier mind,
Have torn and cast beneath the billow,
Thine eyrie from its Alpine pillow—
Have strewn thy plumage on the wind;
And now the victors bind
Round thy false neck the penal chain—
Thou art fallen; and ne'er shalt rise again.

1816.

The last two stanzas allude to the return of Napoleon from Elba, the battle of Waterloo, and his captivity at St. Helena.

EPITAPH FOR COLONEL RICKARD LLOYD.

(KILLED AT THE PASSAGE OF THE NIVE.)

IN memory of a man who sleeps not here,
The hands and hearts of many joined to rear
This tablet; for there lived not on the earth
A man of nobler spirit, purer worth.
Remember Lloyd!—He led his war-worn band,
The first who trod the Frenchman's fated land;
And fought beneath a hero's eye, and won
Applause from him who lavishes on none.

At length a bullet struck him, and he sank,
Envied in death, on the triumphant bank
Of wintry Nive—yet though it be a pride
To die thus, think not unavenged he died.
No! round the sacred reliques of the brave
A hecatomb of victims graced his grave:
With them, his silent ashes moulder there;
His full-voiced fame is here—is everywhere.

1816.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF WATERLOO.*

"Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments,
Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,
Our steadfast marches to delightful measures."

SHAKESPEARE.

THE wine-cup sparkles to the brim,
And sparkling beams each eye of pleasure;
The maidens in their rosy trim,
Light o'er the scene, like Dryads, skim,
Glancing to each varied measure:
The trembling soul of music springs
On air with her seraphic wings,

* Celebrated by the Officers of the 30th regiment in Limerick. 1816.

And pours above, aside, around,
Her lavish ecstasy of sound.

Breathe not now one tone of sadness—
Here joy should catch a martial madness—
Vain falls the tear for those who die!
Even now some gallant soul may fly;
But, when Glory seals the breath,
Man has nobly conquer'd death.
Weep not, then, for those who fell;
Tears, not of grief, but pride should swell:
Those for whom you vainly sorrow
Less gloriously had sunk to-morrow.
Fill, then, the wine-cup to the brim,
And pledge each living heart of flame;
But, while you quaff, remember him
Who only lives in fame.

A shout—a shout for Wellington!
Such as he heard at close of day,
When the strife was o'er, and the battle won,
And he wept o'er the reliques of the fray.
A shout for Picton! such as swell'd
When round his corse stern vengeance peal'd,
And France fled far, in wild amaze,
From bayonets' shock, and cannon's blaze.

And raise such shout for Ponsonby,
As when his headlong chivalry
At Salamanca, like a flood,
Swept o'er Le Marchant's bed of blood!
Shout—shout—for all whose ashes strew
The sacred field of Waterloo!

But who amid the countless brave,
Who fill, or are to fill, the grave,
Who more deserve th' acclaiming cheer
Than those brave souls who call'd us here?

Lo! where yon shatter'd standards droop,*
Before whose hallow'd fragments, bending,
The Gallic Eagle learn'd to stoop,
From Fame's high pinnacle descending!
Through many a storm, o'er many a wave,
Those gallant flags have sped, to brave
The clouds of battle—skill'd to fly
In every clime triumphantly.
Now, like two veterans from the wars,
Grand in decay, proud in their scars,
They stand amongst us, and divide
Strange thoughts of mingling grief and
pride;—
Of those that conquered—those that died.

* The colours of the 30th regiment.

O blessed be the hands that bore
Their glorious shreds from shore to shore!
From distant Egypt's fiery gales,
To Lusitania's shadowy vales—
O'er high Castille's romantic mountains,
Leon's plains, and Ebro's fountains—
And Pyrenean peaks of snow,
And Gascon fields that bloom below—
And taught them, last, to flout the breeze,
Amid Parisian palaces.

Veterans of many a hard-fought field!
Your fame shall last till time shall yield.
Where'er you wander, think that here
The memory of your worth is dear;
That manly hands shall long to strain
Hands brave and honoured once again—
And female bosoms sigh to claim
Communion with your toils and fame!

Limerick, June 18th, 1816.

TO M.

YOU ask for what I love thee, dearest!
Thy mind's unspotted purity.
You ask me why I call thee fairest?
Because that mind is in thine eye.

'Tis not the sober claim of duty,
Nor feature's charm, nor wit's gay flight,
That binds me;—'tis the moral beauty
That clothes thee in an angel light.

And yet thou art as fair a creature
As ever sprang from Nature's hand;
Of faultless form, and blooming feature,
With wit and wisdom at command.

But oh! thou hast a richer treasure—
Thy gentle heart, thy soul, for me!
For these I'll love thee without measure,
And love thee to eternity!

1816.

IN the fulness of time I shall lie in the earth,
In the tomb of my fathers, the land of my birth;
And the sun shall look down without heat on my clay,
And the breezes pass by me, unheeded, away;
And the sights that I loved shall look bright from yon hill,
And the sounds that have soothed me be exquisite still.
The soft gleaming lake in the heart of the mountains,
The lapse of the stream, and the falling of fountains,
The paths where my footsteps now loitered, now strayed,
The moss-covered seat in the depth of the glade,
All these shall be loved, as I loved them before,
When the forms that now fill them are thought of no more.
And the light foot of infancy bound like a deer
O'er scenes that my sadness regards with a tear.
Even here in the shade of those beautiful bowers,
Where the presence of love cheers the best of my hours,
Other hearts in the fondness of youth shall entwine,
Nor think of the raptures long vanished from mine.

1816.

THE SORROWS OF PEACE.

FRAGMENT.

THE light that never shines in vain
Brings a sure shadow in its train.
Peace came, but with a frowning mien,
Peace reigned, but o'er a wintry scene.
Within our populous cities' bounds
No busy voice of trade resounds:
Behind his ploughshare, faint and weary,
The peasant plods, with heart as dreary,
Gloomily casting on the plain
Seed that may yet be reaped in vain.
Our streets are empty, and our courts
Hushed with rank grass: in silent ports
Dismantled ships float listlessly,
Like weeds upon a stagnant sea:
Men stalk abroad with eyes down-bent,
Muttering dark words of discontent;
And the unbridled multitude
Clamour aloud for bread or blood.

War's heaviest pangs were light to those
Which mock our late and false repose:

His million mouths consumed whate'er
Our labour earned, or soil could spare;
Whose very waste thus caused a spring
Of wealth its source replenishing:
And, as he filled the cup of grief,
Pride soothed, and glory sang relief.
Beneath our conquering flag unfurled
Still commerce roamed the hostile world,
Nor roamed in vain: where'er she flew
The buds of wealth bloomed forth anew.
Now, barred from every faithless shore,
We task and toil, but thrive no more:
Despair is clamorous at the gate,
And Triumph whispers kindred Fate;
While Want and Treason, hand in hand,
Gorge on the vitals of the land!

1816.

FRAGMENT.

DEGENERACY OF NATIONAL CHARACTER.

WE have been too vain of liberty;
Our very morals wax too free:
And thus, corrupted at the source,
Our manners hold a turbid course.

The days of chivalry are fled;
The heart of chivalry is dead!
The daring deed, the lofty thought,
The unearthly hope, and zeal unbought,
The love that seemed too pure for man,
The faith that spurned this mortal span,
The valour glory could not sate,
The patriot fire that rose o'er fate,
The truth, the trust, the soaring spirit,
That heroes from high heaven inherit,
All, all are doomed to fade away;
Their memory sinks in slow decay;
Like dateless armour worn with rust
And cankering in forgotten dust!

What though the searching eye may find
Some casual stains, such traits behind;
Are modern men and later times
Gentler of mood, more free from crimes?

'Tis a true tale, though melancholy,
How wisdom grows the nurse of folly;
How knowledge, clutched from pride, will breed
A madness in the heart and head;
How gifts abused become accurst,
Perverting still the best to worst!

Thus science has her alchymy;
Religion sours to bigotry;
Thus liberty becomes a sin
Preached by the savage Jacobin:
Thus errors are made obstinate
Stung by the madness they create.

1817.

TO MY COUNTRY.

SOIL of my birth! Land of my pride!
The world's last refuge and sole guide!
Britain, the just, the free, the glorious,
The brave, the generous, the victorious;
O beauteous in each varied dress
Of pomp, or rural happiness;
Whether forth issuing, mailed, to war,
Crown'd like a queen on glory's car—
Or seated in the peaceful ring
Beneath the hawthorn in the spring—
The bright-eyed muse shall weave for thee
Her songs of immortality.
Not that around thy living head
Triumphs are richlier garlanded
Than lavish ages pour'd on his
Of Marathon or Salamis—

But that thy grandest deeds were wrought
For justice; with so pure a thought,
It seem'd as if the heavens, allied,
Came down to combat by thy side.

What, though thy storied battles live
In that grave splendour Truth can give?
Though jealous Science, proud of fame,
With thine identifies her name?
What, though the sister Arts around thee
In their lovely dance have bound thee?
In arms resistless, as in mind;
Thy triumphs are of nobler kind.
Fame, such as thine, can ne'er depart—
Its seat is in man's moral heart;
And stablished there with Truth, shall never
Fade from the soul, but live for ever!

By thee th' enfranchis'd slave was given
Freedom on earth, and hope in heaven.
Still'd at thy voice, with holy awe,
The wandering savage stoops to law;
And, kneeling on the tear-wet sod,
Lifts up his hands and heart to God.
'Twas thine that blessed word to preach
Far as the voice of hope can reach,

In every tongue, in every clime,
To want, to sorrow, and to crime.
Pure from the heart branch out from thee
The living veins of charity;
And education, hand in hand,
Travels with thee each distant land;
For every thirsty lip to bring
A draught of knowledge from the spring;
Down whose broad waters, as they spread,
The riches of the earth are led—
And those sublimer gifts that flow
From God above, to man below.

1817.

A POET'S HOME.

I ASK not stately palaces—
Mine be a cottage closed with trees,
Airy, yet shelter'd, on a slope,
Whence the eye may range with hope—
A poet's nest, with alleys green,
High terraced walks, and glades between.
—Let roses, and each climbing flower,
Hang round my white walls like a bower—

Before my porch a bright parterre,
With blooming shrubs that scent the air;
While trees of every flower and leaf
Group thickly round, in dark relief.
Give to my books a spacious room,
Through green leaves lit (a sunny gloom)
With one deep window in a bow,
To catch the various scene below;
The winding stream, the cultured vale,
The meadows "hedg'd with poplars pale;"
The manor-house, the spire, the town,
With gardens green, and stubbles brown;
The sparkling mill, and shadowy bridge,
And, stern o'er all, yon mountain ridge,
Thrusting from each jutting rock
The giant antlers of the oak,
And bathing in yon sunny lake
The shadow of his purple peak.

Such be my home—love's wedded smile
Making life blest and holy; while,
Sporting their kindred flowers among,
We watch our bright-faced infant throng—
Or, 'mid a group of faithful friends,
(When the light of day descends)
Round the household fire rehearse

Some famous page of ancient verse—
Or, with airy feet advance
To th' unpremeditated dance—
Or bend o'er music's witcheries,
With parted lips, and glist'ning eyes.
—And let me gather round my door
A busy, cheerful, virtuous poor;
Homely in speech and pure from art,
Truth and the Bible in their heart.

Thus let me live! and, when I die,
Not fade from good men's memory!
Leaving to those I love, a name
Loved, and not all unknown to fame.
1817.

PETRARCA. CANZONE III.

"Standomi un giorno solo alla finestra,"

I STOOD one morning in a lonely place,
Whence the strange shapes of many a fearful thing
Swift by my troubled eyes went shadowing.
A creature first appear'd, whose gentle face
Beam'd with a human grace,

Even Gods might look upon with love:—behind,
Two dogs, (one white, one black) swift as the wind,
Rush'd with bare fangs, impatient of the prey:
Breathless she sank, all mortal trials past,
Beneath a stone at last:—
Sighing, I watched her beauty's swift decay,
By death untimely swept from earth away.

A bark then, on the bosom of the sea,
With silken sails, and golden ropes, appear'd,
And sides with ebon streak'd on ivory.
The sea was tranquil, and the air was soft;
And not a vapour veil'd the heavens aloft;
Proud in her noble freightage she career'd:
Sudden, a storm in the cold east I heard,
Tossing into the skies the troubled wave,
That drove that bark upon a hidden reef.
Scarce one swift hour (ah, bitter was my grief!)
With fate she struggled, when a moment gave
Her wealth and worth to a devouring grave.

Deep in a leafy glade the sacred boughs
Of a young laurel verdantly arose,
Fair as a shapely tree of paradise;
The birds beneath her shade so sweetly sang,
While every shape of pleasure bask'd around,
It seem'd as if I trod some happier world:

Yet, while I gazed with fix'd, admiring eyes,
The sky was overcast—loud thunders rang—
Keen lightnings rent the ground—
And from its root that blessed plant was hurl'd.
—Sad are my days! I never can regain
The shadowy freshness of that bower again!

In the same wood a fount up-sparkling play'd,
Pure from the rock—a fresh and dulcet spring,
Scattering its waters, softly murmuring.
On its still shores of dim delicious shade,
Nor flocks, nor herds, nor shepherds, throng'd around,
But nymphs and Muses singing to the sound:
I sat me down; but when,
Amid that paradise of sound and sight,
My heart felt most delight,
Earth open'd; and within that gaping den,
All sank!—Oh, bitter was that hour of ill!
And memory shudders to recall it still!

A phœnix, whose proud forehead beam'd with gold,
With pinions shedding a purpureal light,
Steer'd o'er the wood her solitary flight;
A form celestial, of undying mould,

I deem'd her—till she reach'd that fatal scene
Where the tree perish'd, and the fountain sank.
But all things pass away!
She mark'd the broken stem, the leaves' decay,
The living waters dried within their bank,
Then turn'd upon herself, as in disdain,
Her beak, and died.—That moment, in my heart
A grief was kindled that shall ne'er depart.

At last, in pensive loveliness, there came,
Stepping through clustering flowers, a gentle dame:
(Still memory glows and trembles at the thought)
Humble, yet scorning love's imperfect flame,
She moved;—in simple robes, of such pure hue
They seem'd of snow, in golden broidery wrought,
And from her forehead threw
Folds, light as vapours, veiling her sweet frame.
Sudden, a snake that lurk'd beneath a leaf
Stung her—like a cropt flower she bow'd her head,
And, joyfully in faith, her spirit fled.
—Alas there's nought on earth unchangeable but grief!

1817.

STANZAS FROM MENZINI.

BY A LADY.

LET others praise the rose
That proud in beauty glows,
Boasting the charm of her unequall'd bloom;
Dearer the violet's hue,
Bathed in the morning's dew,
And breathing through the shade her soft perfume.

While droops her languid head
Upon its grassy bed,
And her pale leaves half open to the air,
E'en those dear pallid leaves
Are like a heart that grieves,
Pining beneath the weight of amorous care.

Let Youth his brows entwine
(Mid cups of sparkling wine)
With garlands woven of the damask rose:
But, when the tear-drops start
Fresh from the lover's heart,
Thine is the loveliest, dearest flower that blows.

1817. M.

TRANSLATION OF AN INSCRIPTION

FROM A MURAL MONUMENT AT ROME.

THE past is not; in colours vainly true,
Memory alone retains it:
The future is not: fair in every hue,
'Tis only hope that feigns it.
The present only is; a flash from heaven
But for a moment given:
Then what is life, by which we set such store?
A memory, a hope, a point—no more!

1817.

FROM THE FRENCH OF MADAME DE MURAT.

"WHY art thou such a fleeting treasure?"
Sighing, once, I said to Pleasure;
"From the grasp that would detain thee
"Flying, ere our arms can strain thee!"

Answered Pleasure—" Cease this mourning;
To the Gods due thanks returning:
Had permanence to joy been given
They ne'er had let me roam from heaven!"
1817. M.

PHILOSOPHIC LOVE.

(FROM ROSSI.)

O'ER a book of ancient lore
I saw a little Cupid pore;
And cried: "Behold the infant Sage
Studies Plato's heavenly page!"
O witless bard! conjecture wild!—
'Twas Epicurus charmed the child.
1817.

FROM THE ITALIAN.

UNGRATEFUL Love! that, scornful fliest away,
Scared by my thinly scattered locks of grey;
Now thou art gone, in pity to my grief,
Consoling Friendship comes to my relief:—
If the bright ringlets of my youth had scared thee,
Ah! what a load of sorrow had been spared me!
1817.

CATO IN UTICA.

(FROM LUIGI ALAMANNI.)

ERE yet the self-devoted Cato died,
They promised Cæsar's mercy: "Say," he cried,
"I, who am Cato, and a Roman, fly
Not Cæsar's vengeance, but his charity."

1818.

REPENTANCE.

MADRIGAL OF MICHELAGNOLO BUONAROTTI.

ALAS! alas! thus lingering o'er the course
Of my lost years, amid so many days
Is there not one to cherish as my own?
Deceitful visions, vain desires alone,
Love, with its sighs and tears, and late remorse
(Too frail, alas, have ever been my ways)
Have chained me down; till on the proof I gaze,
How far from truth and joy I have been flying.
Now, moment by moment dying,
While the shades close, and light has just departed,
I totter to my fall, feeble and broken-hearted.

1818.

THE MARCH OF XERXES.

EPIGRAM OF LUIGI ALAMANNI, 1556.

WHEN in the wantonness of kingly pride,
Vain Xerxes spurr'd his war-horse through the tide,
And bore his fleet o'er mountain tops—e'en there
The Eternal bade his evil heart despair:
O'er Hellespont and Athos' marble head,
More than a god he came, less than a man he fled.

1818.

THE GLEN OF GLANGOOLE.

THE hills are all around me—in a dell
Worn by a stream, a deep and winding glen,
On a bare rock, beside a waterfall,
I sit; and musing, lean upon my hand.
The song of birds, and the low, piping wind,
The distant low of cattle, and the hum
Of labouring men, as the breeze dies away,
Make music with the stream's deep under-song;—
A mountain music, that revives old thoughts,
And fills the eye of memory with tears.

These shadowy steeps that lift on either hand
Their brows into the sun, naked of trees,
Yet wear a gorgeous mantle! the green grass,
The golden gorse, the heath of purple bloom
With its brown foliage, group amid the rocks
In tufts, or spreading banks; the lady-fern
Spreads out her delicate fingers; 'neath the stone
Dewed by the torrent's spray, on marshy spots,
The bright, green flag shoots up: a thousand
weeds
Of curious form, and wild-flowers of all hues,
Hang pendent from the fissures of the cliffs.

Far 'neath my eye, even at the valley's gorge,
A ruined chapel with its ivied walls,
Mid the rude grave-stones of the villagers,
Lies sheltered; thence gray orchards, and green
fields
Spotted with cattle; and the furrowed glebe
Where yet the tender wheaten shoot lies hid,
Waiting the warm breath of the tardy Spring,
(Life anchored nigh the haven of the dead)
Bask in the day; beyond, the heathy moor
Spreads out its dusky level—a wide plain,
Prone as the ocean's breast when the winds sleep,
For the cloud shadows to disport upon.
Lo! how along the depths of heaven, like ships

With all their white sails crowding into light,
The vapours float magnificent!—beneath
In beautiful contention with the light,
Shadows are chasing shadows; like wild hounds,
That sweep the dewy mountain's side at morn.

And now thine eastern boundaries, dark plain!
Like youthful memories in life's eve revived,
Flash out to greet the sunset; the blue hills
Rise with their bright crests in serener skies,
And turrets start from groves between, and spires
Mid clustering walls ascend; green hills swell out
Their bosoms; and the valleys sink in shade.

Oh! how I love to watch yon mountain heights!
For there are eyes beyond, now fixed on them,
Thinking of eyes that gaze upon them here:
And there's a constant heart beyond, that beats
With a fond expectation, and doth count
Days, hours, nay minutes, as they creep away,
Pensively chiding the slow-footed time.

With a long sigh from my sweet dream I start.
Beneath me, from the hospitable cot
The blue smoke rises. In their rose-clasped porch
Even now my kinsman and his gentle wife
Wait me with welcome kind, and friendly smiles.

1818.

STANZAS ON SOLITUDE.

I.

THE streamlet that winds thro' the shadowy glen,
The blossom that bends o'er the brink of the fountain,
Are dearest and fairest when farthest from men,
In the depth of the woods, the repose of the mountain.

II.

The wild bird that hangs on the wings of its song,
The deer stepping shy, with a glance through the bowers,
The butterfly carelessly flitting along,
Like the soul of the spring that is nourished on flowers;

III.

The wind with its pipe, on the side of the hill,
Or slumbering at eve on the breast of the river,
When all but the rail and the watch-dog are still,
And the waterfall's voice, that is music for ever;

IV.

All these have a charm that we pine for in vain,
With man in this vortex of folly and madness;
For society binds down the heart with a chain;
And the world only teaches us lessons of sadness.

1818.

PASTORAL SONG.

UNDER the linden bowers
She wreath'd her golden hair;
And bound her brow with flowers—
But, now, she is not there.

Along the dewy meadows
Her sandal'd foot was seen,
Chasing the cloudy shadows
That fled along the green.

She, in the sunny weather,
(Whose fickle smiles are brief)
Would toss the hay together,
Or bind the clustering sheaf.

And she, when Autumn's charms
The twilight shades enhance,

Twining her graceful arms
Would lead the pastoral dance.

Her cheeks of blushing beauty,
Her modest eyes downcast,
I thought it was a duty
To worship as she passed.

Her's were the snowy fingers,
That lov'd the strings of song,
What time the west wind lingers
Poetic steeps among.

Her innocent voice! how sweetly
Arose its simple sound;
While virgins fair and featly
Went dancing in a round!

It mingled with the fountains
Whose resonant voices breathe
The music of the mountains
O'er quiet vales beneath.

It floated o'er the billows,
It stirred the bowering brake:
It died amid the willows
That fringed the placid lake.

Nymphs of the wood and river,
That, fawn-like, trip it by,
And flee from mortals ever,
So graceful, and so shy;

Say, in what cool recesses,
Within your sacred dell,
She dips her golden tresses
Beneath the shadowy well—

Or, in the living waters,
Whose sunny depths display
The Naiad's bashful daughters
Oaring their easy way?

Say, ye fair creatures, whither
Her timid footsteps rove?
That I may seek her thither,
And win her to my love.

ODE TO APRIL.

SWEET April month! that, like a gentle maid,
Com'st with a changeful look, as half afraid,
With all thy train of buds, young Flora's daughters,
And balsam-breathing airs, and bubbling waters;

Now walking brightly through the sunny hours,
Now, shadowy, hid behind a veil of showers :
Oh ! how I love thy blush of delicate bloom,
And that young breath of thine of faint perfume—
And all those swift varieties, that glance
Charms ever new from thy mild countenance :
Still beautiful, whatever they express,
In quickening smiles, or touching tearfulness !
Now, in thy secret places,
Where Nature tends thee with her sylvan Graces,
Thou lov'st to dwell;
Down in the bosky dell,
Where the stream lapses from its shadowy well;
Mark'd by the willow-bush that silent stoops
O'er the cool margin, and those briery groups,
With wild fern mingled, where, in furry troops,
Young rabbits gambol, and the hare sits still,
Screen'd by the golden-thronging daffodil.
These are thy haunts—and thou hast leisure hours
To clothe with bloom the blackbird's vocal bowers ;
And thou hast some to spare,
(King-cups and daisies) for the wild deer's lair ;
Where the gorse spreads a wilderness of bloom ;—
Or on the lonely heath—or in the gloom
Of some old wood, whose glades of sunny moss
Dark, ivied oaks stretch their great arms across.

Thou lovest too, on some high-bosom'd hill,
Thy youthful lap to fill
With cowslips, and to woo
The morning sun, and evening's milky dew,
With scatter'd violets, and soft primrose-banks;
Apart from whose glad ranks
Pallid Narcissus, from the neighbouring mead
Declines above the stream his fragrant head.

Blithe April! like another Hebe, bringing
Sweets in thy cup—in primal freshness springing
From the cold bosom of a rugged nurse—
The Psyche of the kindling universe!
Although the task be thine
Some careless wreaths to twine
For thy maturer sister's radiant brow,
That steals apace upon thy footsteps now,—
(Enchanting May)—yet, in thy virgin eye,
And temperate movements, and young purity,
Thou hast a quiet charm, more exquisite
Than all her glories in the blaze of light.
Nor are thy walks confined
To the free wilderness: amid mankind
Thou makest thy footprints visible in flowers,
And thy breath palpable from cultured bowers.
—The garden-ground is thine, and those sweet
beds

Where Flora pillows her young children's heads—
The many-tinted hyacinths are there,
Granting their odours to the lavish air—
And the dark-smothered violets, that lie
Wrapping their sweets in their own privacy—
The polyanthus, from his cushion'd bed,
Mingling all tints, exalts his varied head—
Auriculas, like some soft-scented beaux,
Stand round the parterre, in well powder'd rows—
From her green, shining bush
The Indian rose looks round, with a faint blush;
Just where the green-house stands, a glittering
mass,
In bright relief starting from shrubs and grass.
Coy periwinkles, too,
Beneath their leaves peep out, with eyes of blue—
And, through the thickets of green underwood,
The warrior wall-flower lifts his crest of blood.
Behold the throne of Spring! Nature's proud
mart!
Deck'd with the brighter jewelries of art.

And those who walk the farm may find thee there,
Benignant month!—for thine is still the care
Of the young corn-blade, struggling to the birth
Through the dark tilth of earth;

And, when the small lambs bleat, thou tend'st
them well,
Leading the totterers to some shelter'd dell,
Where the sun warms them :—and the teeming
kine,
When the young calf is at the heel, are thine;
And, then, thou makest the juicy herbage grow
'Till the swol'n udder gives the milk to flow.

The world's increase, the springs of life, to thee
Belong, sweet nurse of immortality!
The breath of love is on thy lips! the light
Of an imperishable hope is bright
Within thine azure eye! First-born of Time,
Sweet April month, I hail thee in thy prime!

Currah Chase, April, 1819.

THE DREAMS OF YOUTH.

MINE was a visionary youth: my heart
Sought not in gay society its part.
All but that heart I doubted; and methought
The world too harshly judged me:—then I sought
Some kindred solitude, the woods among,
Where none might watch my mood, or hear my
tongue.

There would my soul to Fancy's bosom fly;
There scan her faëry form with raptured eye.
Nor wanted sweeter influence. Yet a child,
Land of the lakes and hills! thy scenery wild
Broke first the slumber of my opening years:
Thy mossy banks caught first the tribute of my tears.
Dear were thy twilight vales, where the stream wound,
Rippling or still, in solitude profound,
Beneath the o'er-arching verdure of broad trees,
(Wedding its sweet voice with the varying breeze;)
A leafy cavern, haunted by cool airs,
And shadows such as pensive twilight wears;
Or where some white cascade the rocks among
Through oaken thickets musically sung!
Dear was that hedge-row path I daily trod,
Dear was that cot, the farm, the common road,
Where sounds and sights of life went bustling by,
All dearer as familiar to my eye!
And loved I not, when evening's brightest hour
Lived on the lake,* all glorious, from my bower
To launch my skiff, and through the sparkling glow
Scan the pellucid depths and rocks below;
Or mid the stillness of the sunny deep,

* Windermere.

Watch the blue shadows of the mountain steep?
And loved I not the Fells—where, brisk and clear,
Rushed the north wind, a free-born mountaineer?
Joyed not my spirit on some jutting peak
To feel the breath of heaven upon my cheek,
And gaze with silence forth through the thin air,
The quiet world around all glistening there,
Yet chequered in its beauty; as if still
Heaven's tear-drops trembled on each breezy hill?
Those sunny slopes, those cots, where Freedom dwells,
Love-chosen bowers, and deep romantic dells,
Those glorious lakes, those mountains wild and free,
Where audibly speaks out the Deity,
Woke with strong touch within my yearning soul
An answering chord that Time shall ne'er control!
But, oh! the spirit that made all things dear,
Spell of enchantment! does it yet dwell there?
And those who made that fireside dear to me,
That danced my infant limbs upon the knee,
That told the tale I loved, that sang the song,
Or led my light foot the green lanes along,
At morn, when sheep are on the mountain side,
Or where the teeming kine drive home at eventide—
Oh, where are these?—And have my years gone by?
Have I, then, learned how all are doomed to die?

Scarce thirty summers fled, and must I feel
That Time alone is indestructible?
Yet let me pause—and, though my eyes are wet,
See through my tears, and hear loved accents yet.
O, venerable woman! let me look
Once more on those mild features, as a book
Wherein all beautiful thoughts are noted well,
And pious deeds recorded: let me dwell
In memory on thy lineaments—thy head
In its white kerchief neatly filleted—
Thy small, spruce body, gently bent by age,
Needing no staff to prop thy pilgrimage;
For thou wert hale and fresh,—kind blessings given
From simple food, and the pure air of heaven:
And skilled wert thou in every household care,
With something always for the poor to spare;
And who so joyed to deal the clamorous elf
Sweets from the cupboard, apples from the shelf,
While thy fine-hearted offspring marked, and smiled,
The heart of Age thus moulded by a child?
Oh, melancholy pleasure, thus to press
The springs of old emotion! Scarcely less
Does the heart open out its inmost core
To phantom forms, and creatures seen no more.

Than to the glowing Present, the warm breath
Of passions, that seem scarcely doomed to death!
Less true the joys our grosser senses give!—
Oh, let me still a visionary live!

And what have been my dreams? Did glory shed
A fancied halo round my youthful head?
Felt I the soul of song upon my breath?
Invoked a Pitt's career, a Nelson's death?
Bade Freedom, Arts, and Polity, explore
Missouri's spring, and Orellana's shore;
Siberian wilds, Australia's world of woods,
And Afric's central realms, and fabled floods?
Seemed I to lead the ranks of battle forth,
Conquering to save—avenger of the earth?
To stamp the hallowed law, whose links refined
Might chain the arm, but not enslave the mind,
The tamer of the proud—the friend of all mankind?
Of such were once my dreams: the youth's quick eye
May range as widely round, may reach as high,
As man's maturer sense, his simpler sight
As yet unblunted by the world's low blight.
His thoughts are like the labours of the bee,
Culled from all freshest blossoms pleasantly;

His hopes, like morning larks unwearied springing
Sunward, and in untroubled transport singing.
Thus, to the day-spring of the days gone by
My singing spirit soared in ecstasy;
Till, in its wild exuberance, my heart
Seemed of the glorious past a glowing part;
For all its glories gathered round me then—
I breathed amid the past, with ancient men;
And Pericles and Plato lived again!
Nor is it strange—alas, all modern worth
Too visibly preserves the stain of earth;
And prejudice through life, and after death,
Infects new greatness with contagious breath:
But they are awful spirits that of old
Lived, and whom still unaltered we behold;
Unmeasured in their attributes, like gods
Come down to triumph in our dark abodes.
Of mind immoveable and iron will,
They stand—like abstract shapes of good or ill,
In virtue, or in vice, alike sublime,
Bright on the horizon of remotest Time:
Like yonder hoary mountains, that arise
All glowing in the light of evening skies;
The first to catch the glances of the sun,
The last he looks on ere his race be done;—
Thus, hanging o'er the darkness of the land,

Like monuments of light the earlier worthies stand!
And they were errors of a lovely faith,
That gave to abstract passions form and breath;
Made homes on earth for children of the skies,
Stooping to man with human sympathies;
Cythera then held beauty's Queen, and Love
Found in each land a consecrated grove;
Upon the Olympian mount the Thunderer dwelt;
Thy foot, O Mars, the Thracian mountains felt:
Apollo trod the sunny paths of air,
With eyes of light, and waves of golden hair,
Or in the twilight laid him down to sleep,
Lulled in the shadow of his Delphian steep:
Gray Neptune shook his trident o'er the main;
The caves of central earth were Pluto's reign:
Awful Minerva stood upon her hill
(Immortal Art encompassing it still)
Beside that beauteous mass of breathing stone,
The hundred pillars of the Parthenon:
The Graces, and the sister Muses nine,
Danced round the well of Helicon divine:
Wood-Nymph and Satyr made each valley ring,
And every Naïad blessed some favourite spring!
Nor to the temples, nor the haunts, alone,
Of Gods I wandered; to the ruined throne
Of fallen greatness—to the storied arch,

Resounding once to the triumphant march
Of Constantine or Trajan; thy proud walls,
Vast Coliseum; and the ruined halls
Of Dioclesian, by the Adrian Sea—
And all the sculptured pomp of Roman pageantry:
Thence to the Eastern world; the mountains rude,
Where the ark rested; Babel's solitude;
Upon the silent desert's edge afar,
The pillared terraces of Chilminar;
The mystic characters, and caverned aisles
Of Indian Elephanta; and those piles
Of long-withdrawing porticoes that stand
Far shadowing o'er Palmyra's level sand.
Nor left I Mizraim's ancient realms behind,
Mother of arts, dark nurse of half mankind!
Vast sepulchre of grandeur! awful space,
Where Man with Time hath run, and lost the race!
The mind that once informed thee is no more;
But thou hast dread mementoes on thy shore,
Sad witnesses that last but to declare
How vain the giant toil that reared them there!
Behold them yet, beneath the sun's red disk,
The lonely Sphinx, the stately Obelisk;
Dim porphyry columns in red sand half hid;
And, high o'er all, the eternal Pyramid,

Whose base subdues the earth; whose dusky head
Cleaves the still, sultry, air. The mighty dead
Lie there in vain—their very names unknown,
They sleep 'neath monuments of nameless stone!
On these I mused: 'till softer visions came,
And Hope's impassioned hand unveiled the dream.
Then rose a faëry form, as soft and bright
As beckoned e'er the bard or crowned the faithful knight:—
Pure as an untouched heart will chastely draw,
And kind, yet compassed still with loving awe.
Angel-like, on she drew: no dream was here:
She came—I knelt—I trembled—worshipped near.
She was a radiant being made to bless
A heart love-tried, with virtuous tenderness.
There was a vernal gladness in her eye—
All life—all youth—all love—all purity.
The breath of Spring came fragrant from her lip;
And Spring bloomed on her cheek: her foot's light trip,
As with the lowly glance of maiden fear
She moved, scarce left its sound upon the ear:
Health played around her, yet no vulgar health;
Hers was a delicate bloom that came by stealth;

The dye of modesty, love's trembling light,
Varying its breath-like changes exquisite;
Feelings—, oh such as sealed in secret lie;
And thoughts whose utterance lives but in the eye:
A mind whose placidness seemed caught from
heaven,
Like breezeless ocean on a cloudless even.
—And is she mine and hold we to our heart
Pledges and memories that shall not depart?
Prophetic dreams! not vainly have ye poured
On me your treasures rich as miser's hoard.
That thought whose dawn my youthful heaven
made bright
Masters my manhood's world with sober light.
Lo, these the very footpaths, these the bowers
That heard the whispers of our bridal hours!
Again your murmurs sound; again arise
The unfailing vision to my tearful eyes!
That old alcove beneath the broad oak-tree—
Thou, with thy latest love-pledge on thy knee,
Our blue-eyed girl, with leaps to my embrace,
Snatching swift kisses with infantile grace;
While he, our first-born, kneeling at our feet,
Proffers his woodland posy, fresh and sweet,
Sweet as the child who cull'd it from its lair,
To strew our laps or braid his sister's hair.

Enchantress Fancy! thy creative sway
Pervades the world; thy wand all hearts obey:
Thine is the gentle influence, thine the power,
The past to quicken—paint the future hour!
The wretch decrepid, friendless, poor, unknown,
Stretched on his bed at midnight, and alone,
May snatch thee to his breast, live on thy tongue,
His pangs forgetting as he lists thy song.
His fevered form can mount upon thy wing,
And taste the freshest gusts of balmiest Spring!
Faint from the fight, or gasping from the wreck,
The toil-worn sailor sinks along the deck;
And, as his bronzed brow rests upon his arms,
Shuts out with closing lids all past alarms;
While dreams come round him, rocked upon the billow,
Calm as the infant's on its genial pillow.
What sees he now? A harbour of the deep
Stretched beneath woody heights, in sunny sleep,
With many a winding creek and darkling bay,
Through jutting groves retiring from the day:—
At the far end, upon the water's edge,
Just rising from a stained and weedy ledge,
A cottage in a plot of garden-ground;
And in a porch, with rose and woodbine wound,

His gentle wife, her spinning-wheel at rest,
Clasping a rosy infant to her breast;
While a more noisy group, beneath yon cliff,
With shouts rock to and fro their light-ribbed skiff.
Plain competence is all he dares to ask;
Home to demand and bless his daily task;
The element he loves, but free from thrall;
And woman's fondness to illumine all.

Where is the soldier's wife? Ah, lonely lot!
Poor, heart-sick dreamer of the cheerless cot!
Ay, there she sits, and consecrates with tears
The silent flight of her half-widowed years:—
Long winters now have passed since he was born,
That blooming boy! and since his sire was torn
From her fond bosom, yet a conscious bride,
A tearful trembler blushing at his side.
Of this she daily dreams, and of the time—
The young spring blossoms just were in their
prime—
When first of that dear burthen, with a start,
Conscious, she felt him grow beneath her heart.
Oh, moment strangely mingling joy and fear;
Named with a blush in the young husband's ear;
When clasped in that embrace of rapture wild
She hails him first the father of her child!—
Old memories woo her still, like breath of flowers

Borne on the breeze new-scaped from morning
bowers:
And thus she smiles away the gloom of sorrow;
Thus strives to think but of the hopeful morrow;
And whispers to her boy with tearful glee,
How soon that absent father he shall see;
Whose name so fondly to that lisping tongue
She teaches, earliest burden of his song.
But sometimes darker fantasies assail
Her solitude; and most when winds prevail:—
Ay, when the storm is up, and the dim air
Shakes with the thunder; then she fears and there!
No shape of woe but o'er her rises then,
No toil, no pang that waits on valiant men—
The frozen bivouack, the famished march,
The shell wide bursting o'er its fiery arch,
The breach, the mine, the midnight battle-plain,
And wives that blindly grope among the slain!
She faints—ah no, she wakes; and Hope once
more
Bids her kneel down, and pray that God may yet
restore!
Such, potent visions! such your walks, assigned
Through all the circling pathways of mankind.
And oft to you a nobler task is given—
To soothe the bed of death with thoughts of
heaven:

Wing the freed soul: and from the entered cloud
Dispense a weeping hope to those beneath it
bowed.
Yea, when some darling form is snatched away,
And closed for ever in its house of clay,
Rapt Fancy turns the streaming eye to gaze
Far on through sapphire depths and starry blaze,
Nor fails, with power sublimed by cleansing grief,
To envizage Truth, and vivify Belief.
There, haply lingering yet, the soul we love
Looks back to earth, though winged to joys above;
Bends once its sacred form and sainted head
O'er scenes for ever dear, for ever fled;
Then darts with clasped hands mid that choir
eterne,
Whose triumph thrills the everlasting bourn
With shout of adoration and pure hymn;
There cherub grows mid kneeling cherubim,
Who gird with living ring that blest abode,
The throne of Christ, the judgment seat of God!

1820.

A DREAM.

FRAGMENT.

THE sun had set, and o'er the eastern sky
The cloudless moon stept forward into light,
With a pale smile, and looked round bashfully;
Even as a bride, who, watching the calm night
Steal o'er the mountain and the silent river,
Heaves a soft sigh, and gives a gentle shiver.

The moon was up; and all her train was there
Of handmaid stars, that beautifully glance
Their twinkling eyes around; and through the air,
To sounds, unheard by mortal ears, advance;
And duly, as the shadowy night returns,
Pour out their rills of light from crystal urns.

Soothed by the placid hour, and much opprest
By the day's turmoil, I sought out the shade
Of an o'er-arching oak; and took my rest
On moss-beds prank'd with flowers, whereon
I laid
My languid limbs; and soon began to close
My eyes for weariness, courting repose.

That tranquil bower was planted near the bank
Of a vast river, on whose heaving breast
Tall masted ships, at anchor, rose and sank
So gently, that the motion look'd like rest.
Woods waved along the margin, and afar
The steadfast mountain propped the silent star.

Skirting the distant shore, washed by the tide,
With all its jutting quays and rising towers,
That glistened in the moonlight, in its pride
A city lay, watching the midnight hours:
Soundless she lay, as though she were a tomb,
Whence life had passed—yet death without its gloom.

Deep sleep came o'er me: suddenly, methought,
A mighty wind up-gathered; clouds spread wide
O'er heaven; the congregating waves seemed fraught
With a hoarse fury: loud above them cried
The Spirit of the Tempest, in his wrath,
As o'er the earth he traced his fiery path.

Then, from that city's heart, a wild commotion
Burst on my ear:—I heard a cry go forth
Of freedom, like the wave-fall of the ocean
Upon a rock-bound shore:—the solid earth

Shook; the consummate shout of victory
Peal'd out: and I was ware that some new day
was nigh.

The scene was changed, and at that city's gate
I stood: the air was musical with joy;
And marshal'd ranks went by in ordered state,
Chariot and steed, stern warrior, laughing boy,
The matron with her babe: one gladness filled
Those thousands—the hush'd heaven with rapture
thrilled.
Upon his car of triumph, drawn along
By shouting crowds, a champion meekly stood,
Bending around to that tumultuous throng:
Conqueror, yet half by modesty subdued;
While at his chariot-wheel the vanquished band
Followed, with downcast eyes, linked hand to
hand.
The slave that slept had waken'd—

* * * * * *

LINES.

SORROW to him who with a tearless eye
Can tell of friendship's death-dissevered tie;
Can, with firm hand, retouch each fading line
O'er which submiss affection loves to pine;

Or, with the limner's skill, revive a form
Defaced by death, and equalled with the worm.
Lamented Waller! man ne'er dropt a tear
Truer than that which consecrates thy bier,
When stooping o'er thy grave, we feel how all
That worth we prized hath fled beyond recall:
The brow of open thought, and inborn sense,
The ingenuous eye whose glance was eloquence,
The heart, round which the kindliest feelings
clung,
And, herald of that heart, the blameless tongue;
The liberal hand, which dealt, in just degree,
The sacrament of thoughtful charity;
All lost in undistinguishable gloom!
Closed with past ages in one common tomb!
Thus fades, commingling with its parent earth,
The perishable part of human worth—
But that unearthly essence, which descends
From a diviner source, for holier ends,
Th' immortal soul, to that, perhaps, 'tis given
Still to preserve some human thoughts in heaven;
To cherish, kneeling at the throne of God,
Some fond remembrance of its first abode.
Oh then return to bless our nightly trance!
Smile on our dreams with thy meek countenance;
O'er those that live—alas! survivors—bend—
The lonely father—nor forget the friend!

VERSES FOR MUSIC.

I.

A low, unearthly sound
Is groaning on the air;
And there shoots along the ground
A shadow, and a glare:
A shroud is o'er the sky,
And the thunder-stroke is nigh—
Oh ye Dead! oh ye Dead! 'tis the hour
When ye rush on my heart with avenging power!

II.

They are gone—the steely glare,
And the tempest rattling loud:
There is sunshine in the air,
A bow upon the cloud;
A music in the trees,
A perfume on the breeze—
Oh ye Dead! oh ye Dead! 'tis the hour
When ye steal on my soul with a healing power!

MAIDENLY SORROW.

CANZONET.

I.

MINE eyes are filled with tears!
And wherefore is it so, thou foolish maiden?
Fond love is always full of fears;
And therefore are mine eyelids wet with tears,
My heart with sorrow laden.

II.

My cheek is wan and pale!
And wherefore is it so, thou simple maiden?
Fond love doth all too much prevail;
Therefore the roses on my cheek are pale,
My hopes, like flowrets, faden.

III.

My lips are silent grown!
And wherefore is it so, thou timid maiden?
Fond love is loath her tale to own;
And therefore are my lips so silent grown—
They fear to be upbraiden!

IV.

Loose is my virgin hair!
And wherefore is it so, lamenting maiden?
Fond love, repulsed, taketh no care:
Therefore dishevelled is my raven hair,
My brow with shame is laden.

LUCRETIA.

(FROM THE LATIN.)

WHEN chaste Lucretia with her life blood dyed
Her dagger — "Witnesses, come forth!" she cried—
"My blood to man, my spirit to God, and say,
By force I fell, the tyrant's loathing prey."

1829.

THE COURSE OF TIME.

MAY is the bridal of the year: young Spring
Then marries Summer; and their child is Autumn.
Hoar Winter next succeeds, the year's old age;
And then comes second childhood—death—and then,
The resurrection: and Spring blooms again.

1831.

MADRIGAL.

I SAT down by her side, and told my love;
Pressing one arm around her slender waist:
When she with sudden start, and blushful haste,
And mild, averted face,
Seeking that arm which trembled to remove,
Half rose from my embrace;
Yet somehow seemed reluctant to reprove.
A timid hope, commingling with vague fears,
Came shivering o'er my eyelids wet with tears:
The sweet emotion linked her frame with
mine—
She fell upon my neck and murmured "Thine."

1832.

FROM MELEAGER.

ME from my mother's nursing bosom ravished
The swift of foot, the long-eared Hare,
Sweet Phanion nurtured in her breast; and lavished
Spring-flowers for my dainty fare.
Nor pining for my mother's love I perished,
But over-fattened and too fondly fed:
And still my image in her dreams is cherished—
And my small bones are buried by her bed.

1834.

FROM ANTIPATER.

DEAR was his daughter to Antigones,
And his last counsels to his child were these.
" Beloved girl! let industry sustain
" Thy maiden poverty with virtuous gain:
" And be the example of thy mother's life
" A blessed dower to him who calls thee wife!"

1834.

ON ANACREON.

FROM ANTIPATER.

MAY ivy, thick-embowered, oh Anacreon,
flourish round thee;
May herbage of the soft, empurpled meadows
mantle o'er thee;
May fountains of the whitest milk gush foamingly
beside thee;
And Earth, as from a source, pour fragrant wine
to cheer thee!
So, round thy dust and bones delight may linger,—
(If that the Dead, indeed, feel aught consoling)
Oh fondler of the lyre! beloved poet!
Whose song was aye of love through life's long
voyage.

1834.

FROM THEOCRITUS.

EURIMEDON! thy timeless death hath left
Thy boy an orphan: yet in peace sleep thou.
Thy tomb a nation builds; while he, bereft,
Shall in thy country find—such is her vow—
A parent for thy sake. Rest thee with heroes now.

1834.

A SONG OF SPRING.

ADDRESSED TO A CHILD.

I.

IT is Spring!
On every spray
Blithesome birds salute the day!
High in the airy ocean blue,
Above our old ash avenue,
Black rooks are wheeling; and the daws
Wrangling on the grass for straws:—
For nests must be made
Ere eggs be laid;
Soft and warm,
Secure from harm,

Out of reach of knavish boy,
That robs poor mother bird of joy.

II.

It is Spring!
Along the river
Run light breezes, sunbeams quiver:
A rippling ring
Shows the leap of the trout
In and out;—
Clouds of flies
Are rising and shifting,
Sinking and drifting,
And blinding one's eyes:
Swallows are skimming the verge
Of the lake's tiny surge;—
With open throat
Rushing along,
Too swift for a song.
A little boat
With a Ladye fair
Floats, as on air:
While the light laugh of her sailor boys
Rings around with a heartfelt noise.
Alone I loiter on the shore,
And mark the flash of the measured oar;—

The swan and her daughters
Come, flapping the waters:
Then sink at rest
On snowy breast;
Or round the boat
With arching throat,
Silently move
Like spirits of love.

III.

It is Spring!
Through tufted clovers
Roam the glad sheep, chartered rovers.
There's joy with the lambs
As they gambol and bleat,
Or kneel to the teat,
And quaff till satisfied;—
With fond approving eyes, their dams
Look round and lick their side.
The heifer is full and sleek;
And venerably meek
Are her calm majestic eyes,
As her calf beside her lies;—
Breathing sweet, contented airs
O'er the cowslips, well she fares;
And, heedless of their future fates,
Quietly ruminates.

IV.

It is Spring!
The dewy morn
Echoes no more to hunter's horn:
The death shots now no longer ring
Through tawny gorse, or prickly cover,
Stubble plain, or woodland over.
The leashed dogs steal,
Sleepy and slow, at their master's heel.
From her seat behind the fern,
The hare leaps out, then back doth turn,
Listening, with long, uplifted ear;
But no foemen's step is near.
The white rabbits, fearful souls,
Glance abroad from sandy holes.
The dappled deer, with antlers aback,
Bounds through the hazel and holly brake.
Where he lay, still lie
The blue-bell tracts like patches of sky:
And the sylvan banks
Are white with ranks
Of their own anemone.
The doves, remote in rock recesses,
Sweeten the woodland wildernesses—
It is the genial time
Of weddings and of births,

When the year is in his prime,
And all his heart is Earth's!

V.

It is Spring!
Mid vapours light
The moon walks softly through the night;
Dispensing upon either side
Looks that suit a maiden bride,
By a new world, wonder-fraught,
Divided long in dubious thought.
She looks at the cedar, and looks at the yew,
But the willow bower she gazes through:
Her white hands play
With the aspen spray;
Her tresses are gemmed with the ivy dew.
It is the hour for dreaming:
And Fancy only wakes to watch that star
Whose bright, mysterious car
Mocks with keen flash yon moon's uncertain gleaming!
The restless eye confounds, well-pleased, the real
With the desired ideal.
Those sounds up-gathering from the distant wood,
And that low coiling flood,
Visit us like a breeze

Launched from some fabulous land of witcheries,
Where nought is true, and all things are but
seeming.
Hark! 'tis the hermit owl
Shouting from his ivy cowl,
In or near the great old fir—
Now the reeds in slumber stir—
Hark! the landrail, loved and sung
By me when love and life were young;
Early prized and honoured late—
Calling his new-wedded mate—
Oh solemn are the sounds,
Thus varied as they are,
That wander over midnight grounds;
Draw near, and die afar!
They speak of life pervading,
And love for ever new:—
But of things that are fast-fading
They whisper too!

STANZAS.

I.

BY the calm margin of the lake wandering I go:
While busy thoughts of other days within me
grow.

The trials of my early days once more return:
And spectres of long-buried griefs rise from their urn.

II.

I think of those who loved me once, some now estranged;
I think of some I still love on, although so changed;
Of health from those slow steps so prematurely fled;
Of the forgetful living; of the untimely dead.

III.

We plant the seed and roots of flowers in fenced parterres,
Wasting on the inanimate, parental cares.
In vain, in vain, our fostering hands tend the young shoot!—
A chill wind nips the bloom, a worm is at the root.

1842.

THE LOT OF ALL.

1.

AS iron is consumed by rust
The strongest hearts are gnawed by care:
And wisest spirits moulder in despair
If God be not their trust.

II.

O life! so full of base annoy,
With vast desires and discontent,
High powers that lack an aim, and sorrow sent
Twin sister of each joy!

III.

Thou fliest with reverted face,
Still wistful, watching the pale shades
That dog thee ever; Fame, that hourly fades;
Love, that so soon decays;

IV.

And Passion, shuddering in disgust
At Marah's bitter draught, daily renewed;
And Hope, still craving her delusive food,
The Dead-sea fruit of dust.

V.

Yon rose, which grew without a thorn
Ere sin began, is now with prickles rife:
And such the sad condition of our life—
We wound while we adorn.

VI.

Yet may considerate thought allow,
That while the emblem threatens, it befriends:—

A power there is, which, with the sharp spine blends
The rose-bloom for our brow!
1844.

FRAGMENTS.

1845—6.

I.

THERE is no danger, friends, unless we fear.
Man may abandon man; God never. He
Is watchful o'er the veriest poor. Thro' him
Their bread is moistened with a tasteful sweetness.
He soothes their sorrows; fits them for their places;
Comforts their labours; crowns their patience—
His arm will aid us when our trouble comes.

II.

Restrict me not in friendship: that still leaves
This earth a paradise. Within it blooms
A veritable tree of life: all sweetness,
And innocent enjoyments of our nature
Drop from its boughs. Friendship dispels all gloom
In sorrow, and supports our tottering steps;

Grafts good on evil, adding grace to good.
In friendship banishment regains his country;
The poor find patrimony; rich men, service;
The feeble, countenance; the sick man, health!
What are the gifts of fortune if unshared
By loved ones? without sympathy beheld?

III.

TIMES PAST.

'TIS hard to form true judgment of the Past.
We measure not from any living substance;
Scan by no rule of definite proportion,
No recognised affinities: but guess
Those beings of our worship from their shadows
Dilated from the sunset of old times.
Thus, 'mid their clouds they show like demigods;
Throned in obscurity; and on the eye
Loom with a lordlier aspect: like strong towers
Seen through autumnal mists, near mountain
lakes.

IV.

THE BRIDE.

RADIANT and pure,
And tranquil in her happiness, she wanders
Forth in the twilight fearlessly; a bride
Moving on earth like yonder moon in heaven,
Upon whose cheek the broad suffusion lies
Caught from the strong gaze of her spouse, the sun—
Unseen to us, but smiling on her beauty
With an unshaken constancy.

V.

A HOMESTEAD.

THAT cottage stood within a garden plot,
Hedged with blush roses and pale jessamine,
And verdant herbage diapered with flowers.
Around, a grove of stately sycamores
Sang to its noontide rest. Old ash, with boughs
Sweeping, and feathery spray, and older oaks,

With tent-like frondage canopied the hill;
Whose grassy sides sloped down into the river,
Like a fair scroll flung out from careless hands.

VI.

CHARACTER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

HER successor will need the help of God:
For, after such a princess, to please men
Were nothing less than miracle. This lady
Stood out among the great, their great example:
And what have been held virtues masculine,
As wisdom, learning, magnanimity,
She most excelled in —
A warlike nation she secured from war:
Religion from religious jars she fenced.
She had that art to range around her throne
Men who had winnowed truth, and weeded learning
From pedantry and ethnick sophistries.
But I have done. These things are heirs to Fame:
Which History, who ever treads beside her,
An honest Muse, shall blazon to the world.
Alas to see her self-subverted thus:
Of a doomed race the last!

VII.

TO live alone
Were but to live for self. Our nature needs
Mutual support, participated joys.
We must not, like the fabled boy, gaze down
On the blank pool that glasses our own image,
And love and languish. We must live for others.
All things existing link with other natures;
The sun stoops from the zenith, and casts forth
His golden net upon the earth and ocean:
The air within her treasury of clouds
Hoards not her rains, founts of fertility:
The mighty rivers seek the mightier seas,
From the eternal mountains with glad voices,
Bounding; and on their mated bosoms bear
Great navies, that bind land to land, and knit
The fellowship of nations.

VIII.

MEN of large intellects have minds like wells,
Too deep for passing griefs to find reflection.

IX.

LIFE hath no conditions
But which displease him. Churchman he'll not be,
For service, even of God, to him is bondage.
The sword he can't abide—'tis hazardous:
All offices of state too cumbrous: trade
So infinitely vulgar! commerce doubtful—
It almost troubles him to be a man.

X.

LIFE streams down to us, a mysterious river
Whose fountain heads we know not: but, we know,
Thickets of care, and clouds of sadnesses
Its secret well environ. Sports avail not,
Nor drowsy quiet, to give zest to life.
The palace is a cage, and golden bars
Soothe not the prisoner! his wings are clipped—
Not so his pleasures: they fly fast and far;
Seldom to come again: but Sorrow stays,
And, like a spaniel, crouches at his feet.

XI.

NOR cheat yourself, nor hire a world to cheat
you :—
That Truth you dare not glance at glares on you.
The grandeur of your birth is not your gain.
High station means high duties: and, remember,
As you give here, you shall receive hereafter.

XII.

OH rather after grief let us rejoice—
Rebuild what earthquake jars, or fire
consumes,
Leap from the wreck to dare the waves again—
After defeat rebrace our battered helms—
And from the abysmal cauldron of despair
Pluck back the plume of Hope with ruddier dye.
How spake great Alexander? " Let us brave
" All dangers of the billow, and explore
" The verge of earth, and look upon the Gods!
" Worthy of heaven, at least Alcides was!"

XIII.

UNION IN ABSENCE.

WE are not as one body bound together;
But a united soul. In absence, surely,

The image of the Loved-one haunts the mind;
And the loved voice re-echoes in the brain.
Such intercourse nor life nor death can bar.

XIV.

BE sure this earthly love which dwells within us
Partakes some portion of divinity,
Betokening foregone joy in heaven. All things
We see endowed with reproductive virtue;
And feel, and know ourselves imperishable.
This mortal frame shall moulder: but across
Our dust a ray of our first excellence
Shall flash, rekindling it to its first glory—
Lifting the spirit to its origin.

XV.

DIVINE love hath its growth within the heart
As pearls beneath the deep: a drop within
Its dim recesses, first, as dew distilled,
Then marvellously transfigured to a gem.
The soul which brings this forth must first receive
A spiritual benediction. Christ then lives
Within us: and we grow, through Him, divine.

XVI.

AN if I be a worm, mine office is
Like his which spins a thread that shall attire
The noblest of the land; and when his task
Is rightly done, sleeps, and puts forth again
His powers in wings that waft him, like an angel,
Onward from flower to flower, and up to heaven.

XVII.

THE dove-like spirit of peace that broods above him
By mortal shock can never be disturbed.

THE END.

PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM, CHISWICK.

154113

BOSTON COLLEGE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS
CHESTNUT HILL, MASS.

Books may be kept for two weeks and may be renewed for the same period, unless reserved.

Two cents a day is charged for each book kept overtime.

If you cannot find what you want, ask the Librarian who will be glad to help you.

The borrower is responsible for books drawn on his card and for all fines accruing on the same.